

average American family's pockets, take the money out of their pockets, and put it in his own. It is incredible.

Republicans are writing the check. Democrats are saying: Hell no.

#### IRAN

Mr. President, on Iran, yesterday, Donald Trump once again displayed the vicious cycle he has trapped America in with his disastrous war in Iran. Within hours, he went from threatening to blow Iran into oblivion to saying that a peace deal was imminent. This he does within 6 hours of one another.

Can anyone believe this guy? Whether you are a world leader, an American citizen, or anything in between, can you believe him? He keeps making it up. He doesn't care about the truth. And what is worse is, he thinks you don't care about the truth—that he can lie, lie, lie.

First—first—he threatens to blow Iran into smithereens, and 6 hours later, he says a peace deal is imminent. We know it is bull. Everyone knows it is bull.

But maybe people don't realize the consequences of that bull—how disastrous this war is and how it turns America's attention, or at least Trump's attention and his followers' attention, to this disastrous war, rather than lowering their costs.

We have seen Trump follow the same pattern in Iran again and again. Trump threatens, Trump retreats, then threatens again—rinse and repeat. That is what he does. Trump is practicing "Groundhog Day" diplomacy, smashing the clock over and over again like Bill Murray does in the movie. Trump is no closer to ending this war, no closer to bringing down the skyrocketing costs of this war, no closer to getting our troops out of harm's way.

Senate Republicans must not continue to allow Trump to remain stuck in this never-ending loop of threats and failed negotiations. I urge Senate Republicans to support Democrats' War Powers Resolution to withdraw our troops from hostilities with Iran, which we are bringing to the floor for an eighth vote—an eighth vote—later today.

Republicans, instead of perpetuating Trump's reckless cycle, could help break it by supporting our War Powers Act to end the war. That would be doing what the American people need and want.

#### CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS

Mr. President, on a speech I am giving at the Center for American Progress on election protection: Later today, I will speak at the Center for American Progress' IDEAS Conference to detail Democrats' plans to protect our elections from MAGA interference.

Donald Trump is escalating his attacks on our elections because he knows his agenda is unpopular. He knows he is going to lose the elections, and so he wants to throw the election, to cheat. Senate Democrats are not

waiting until after the damage is done. I am launching Senate Democrats' election protection task force to prevent, monitor, and challenge any malfeasance from Donald Trump and the far right before, during, and after our elections in November. Our task force is bringing together 11 Senators and some of the sharpest election experts in the country—people like Marc Elias, Eric Holder, Vanita Gupta, Norm Eisen, Skye Perryman, and others—as well as a variety of election protection organizations to safeguard our democracy. I am looking forward to detailing some of our task force's upcoming plans, and I encourage everyone to tune in.

#### SAN DIEGO SHOOTING

Mr. President, finally, on the San Diego mosque shooting, I speak for the entire Senate when I say that we are praying for the families of the victims of yesterday's heinous mass shooting which killed three people at the Islamic Center of San Diego, the city's largest mosque. One of the victims was a security guard and father of eight, Amin Abdullah, who was killed while preventing the gunman from entering the building. His heroic actions surely saved many lives, and we will always owe him and his family a debt of gratitude.

In recent years, mosques, synagogues, churches, and other places of worship have increasingly become targets of discriminatory attacks. We each have a responsibility to condemn the type of Islamophobia we saw in San Diego yesterday, just as we have a duty to stamp out all forms of prejudice and bigotry in our society. No one—no one—in America should have to live in fear of hate crimes or gun violence, but so many do, and that is so, so wrong. Many of us live in fear in our places of worship, in our streets, in the grocery aisle, and we must stop this.

Congress needs to come together to combat hate and to pass commonsense gun reforms to prevent violent individuals from acting on that hate with such deadly efficiency.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

#### WAIVING QUORUM CALL

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum call with respect to the Clarke nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### SECURE AMERICA ACT

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, since January, Democrats have refused to fund Immigration and Customs Enforcement; they have refused to fund U.S. Border Patrol. Month after month after month, Democrats have tried to defund law enforcement in America. When illegal immigrant criminals roam freely, our communities are less safe.

The Biden administration tried an open borders approach. From Fairfax

County, VA, to San Francisco, CA, Democrats' sanctuary cities all across America continue this dangerous and deadly experiment. Consider the families of Laken Riley, Stephanie Minter, and Sheridan Gorman. These families are mourning the tragic loss of their loved ones, each murdered by an illegal immigrant criminal.

It is time for Congress to fully fund Immigration and Customs Enforcement. ICE and Border Patrol keep our communities safe. They protect our country at great risk to themselves personally. The work they do is important, it is urgent, and it is necessary. And the results are undeniable. For the last 12 months, absolutely zero illegal immigrants have been released into our communities through the Biden catch-and-release program.

Republicans are going to make sure that our Border Patrol is fully funded—all of it. This week, the Senate will vote on the SECURE America Act. The SECURE America Act will keep our Nation strong, and it will keep our communities safe. The SECURE America Act funds ICE and Border Patrol. It does it for 3 full years. It builds on the border security successes of the Laken Riley Act, the HALT Fentanyl Act, and the Working Families Tax Cut law. Most importantly, the SECURE America Act guarantees Democrats cannot defund American security during the administration of President Trump.

The SECURE America Act also improves training for Secret Service agents. This prepares agents to counter the evolving threats that we face. It safeguards major national events and every American who attends them. This weekend is the Indianapolis 500. The World Cup is coming up. The 2028 Olympic Games are right around the corner. Americans from coast to coast will be safer when the SECURE America Act becomes law.

Every single Democrat here in the Senate opposes the SECURE America Act. Senator SCHUMER vowed to fight it. He said he would use "every tool in our arsenal." Why is he saying this? Because Democrats believe in open borders. They are the party of open borders. They are the party of "defund the police."

Democrats' outright opposition to protecting the American people contrasts sharply with their own personal demands, which is opposite of what they want for the American people. Democrats are demanding more personal security for themselves but not for the American people.

Following the murder of a State representative last year, Senator SCHUMER complained and said:

[W]e need more protection. We need more money.

Senator CHRIS MURPHY of Connecticut warned that limited resources, he said, "should not be the reason why an assassination of a member of Congress is successful."

Do you know the amount of money that Democrats have demanded? One

billion dollars. One billion dollars to protect themselves, but they vote against protecting our communities. It is wrong. Democrats are much more supportive of protecting themselves and illegal immigrant criminals than they are of protecting the citizens of this great Nation.

The message from the Democrats is this: Our Nation's safety and security doesn't matter.

My message is this: The safety and security of our citizens and our communities should be the No. 1 priority of everyone serving in the U.S. Senate.

Republicans are going to stand up to protect American citizens. We will pass the SECURE America Act, and we will continue to keep American communities safe.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). The minority whip.

#### RECONCILIATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if you follow the U.S. Senate priority agenda, you are realizing at this moment in time, we are in the midst of a national emergency—a national emergency. What would you guess that would be? The war in Iran? Well, certainly, when it cost America 14 lives at least at this point and when you have billions of dollars being spent. I believe the figures—the latest one reported was \$29 billion. Is that the national emergency? No.

Is the national emergency in the Senate the pending invasion of Cuba? No.

How about the President's tariff taxes—tariff taxes that have raised the cost of living across the United States? No, that is not the national emergency.

Gasoline prices—would that be a national emergency to the Senate leaders? It was \$5.49 a gallon in Chicago last weekend. But that is not it.

How about grocery prices, utility prices, rent prices, daycare prices? No, that is not on the Republican agenda as a national emergency.

What is on the agenda as far as the Senate is concerned is the billionaire boondoggle ballroom—ballroom. America desperately needs a new ballroom, and they are asking for \$1 billion—\$1 billion—to build it.

I thought the President promised that his golfing friends and business leaders were going to pay for this, not the taxpayers. Well, that has all changed.

This weekend, the Senate Parliamentarian ruled that funding President Trump's personal pet project, his gold-plated ballroom, as currently written cannot be included in the Republicans' partisan budget reconciliation bill before the Senate. To that, I say thank heavens.

I distinctly recall the President's promise that the American people were not going to pay for this ballroom. How quickly he retreated on his word and asked taxpayers to cough up \$1 billion—another broken promise.

This ruling by the Parliamentarian in response to a challenge brought by

Senate Democrats is a win for the American people across the country, but don't kid yourself—Senate Republicans are already back to the drawing board for this ballroom emergency which we face, attempting to revise the provision so it can be included in the reconciliation bill.

Americans continue to struggle with high prices at the grocery store and at the gas station. Republicans have shown where their priorities lie: appeasing the President and writing him a blank check for a new ballroom and a mass deportation campaign.

This much we know: When President Trump has his way with his billion-dollar ballroom emergency project, there will continue to be no room on the Trump dance card for America's working families.

President Trump's war of choice in Iran, as well as his continued tariffs, is squeezing American families hard—in housing, groceries, and fuel costs and utility bills; inflation that surged to 3.8 percent—the highest level since the pandemic and is outpacing wage growth.

In Illinois, drivers are paying more than \$5 a gallon for gas—as I mentioned, last week, \$5.49 a gallon in Chicago. Illinois electricity bills are up by more than 15 percent on President Trump's watch, and grocery prices had the biggest 1-month jump in nearly 4 years. Fresh vegetables are 44 percent more expensive than they were just 3 months ago. Ask the shoppers at your local stores; they know this personally.

I recently heard from a constituent of mine from Southern Illinois: Reverend Dr. Anthony Paulson. He wrote about the cost-of-living issues. Reverend Paulson told me that, as a pastor, he witnesses the impact of rising costs on his family, friends, and neighbors. Residents come to his church seeking help with the cost of food, housing, and gas to meet their basic needs. The reverend said he offers the church's compassion and support to anyone in need, but the church and the people he serves have been stretched thin, thanks to the across-the-board price hikes we have under the Trump administration.

I think about Reverend Paulson and the countless other constituents who have called my office to sound the alarm whenever I cast a vote in regard to this issue.

But President Trump said he doesn't think about Americans' financial hardships "even a little bit." He continued:

I don't think about Americans' financial situation. I don't think about anybody.

President Trump.

Tell that to Reverend Paulson, tell him you don't care about his concerns or the concerns of the people he serves.

I will also note that just yesterday the President's politicized Department of Justice settled a \$10 billion lawsuit against the Internal Revenue Service. What did the President get because of this settlement? A so-called Anti-Weaponization Fund of nearly \$1.8 bil-

lion. And what will this money from the taxpayers be used for? The administration says it is for, "victims of lawfare and weaponization."

Hold on to your hats and let me tell you the whole story. The whole story starts here on January 6. I was seated in my chair. The other Senators were seated. We were counting the electoral votes.

The Vice President of the United States Vice President Pence was presiding. It was about 2 p.m., at which point the Secret Service came through that door, grabbed the Vice President from where he was sitting in that chair, and removed him from this room.

We sat here and waited, and a minute later, a member of the Capitol Police came before us in uniform and said: Stay in this room, there is a mob outside, but we will make this a protected safe room.

Not 10 minutes later that same officer came before us and said: Cancel everything I said. Evacuate as quickly as possible.

And the Senators of both political parties filed through that door to escape the mob that was invading the U.S. Capitol building where we meet today. It was the most amazing thing to happen in this building since the invasion of the British in the War of 1812. Those of you who have any questions as to whether it actually occurred, look at the video, look at the proof, look at the evidence. The net result was a melee that almost cost more than two or three human lives.

They had over 140 members of the Capitol Hill Police protecting Members of Congress, protecting the Vice President of the United States, and protecting visitors to the Capitol from the mob that President Trump sent to make an impression on the Capitol and the people who were working here. Over 140 instances where these mobsters and insurrectionists beat up the local police who had their lives on the line. You can see the videos. Don't believe a word I said, take a look at the videos and judge for yourself.

The net result was, when it was all over, some 1,500 to 1,600 individuals were arrested and prosecuted for crimes committed that day. Many of them ended up in jail as they should have.

What was the result when President Trump was reelected for a second term? On his first day in office, he gave full and unconditional pardons to all of those mobsters and insurrectionists who invaded the Capitol and attacked our police force. Attacked our police force. Members on the other side come to the floor and talk about who has respect for the police, not one word was said in opposition to the President's full and unconditional pardon to these people who attacked our local police doing their job. Two people as a result of that, two of our officers, died in subsequent days from the trauma that they endured. That is the reality.