

respects Border Patrol and ICE; those are the Democrat leader's words.

Apparently, the fact that there are men and women risking their lives against drug cartels and gang members doesn't merit respect from Democrats. Not only that, but Democrats apparently don't think we should have these Agencies that go after criminals, stop illegal drugs from entering our country, fight human trafficking, and enforce our Nation's immigration laws.

And that last one is, I think, the real issue here. Do Democrats believe we should enforce our immigration laws? It really seems like they don't.

For years now, Democrat-led cities and States have implemented sanctuary policies to prevent their law enforcement agencies from cooperating with immigration authorities. Those policies have had deadly consequences. The murder of Laken Riley is just one example. Yet Democrats still defend these misguided policies.

Then, under President Biden, Democrats' embrace of open border policies reached its zenith. The Biden administration clearly did not believe in enforcing our immigration laws, and the result was year upon year of record-breaking illegal immigration. As even the *New York Times* has reported:

After Mr. Biden became president, migrant encounters at the southern border quickly doubled, then kept rising. New arrivals overwhelmed border stations, then border towns, and eventually major cities like New York and Denver.

Still Democrats embrace open borders. And make no mistake, that is exactly what Democrats are embracing when they opt for giving no funding—zero funding—to Border Patrol and ICE. What they are suggesting is that we have no physical presence at our borders. They are suggesting that we don't have law enforcement officers taking criminal illegal immigrants off of our streets.

And I really have to wonder who they are doing this for because letting illegal immigrants enter our country unchecked and allowing criminal illegal immigrants to roam free is certainly not putting the American people first.

Democrats have made their choice. They would rather have applause from the far-left "defund the police" crowd than keep the American people safe. They would rather have a political issue this November than do their jobs.

As I say, they have made their choice. Fortunately, Republicans can fund these critical Agencies without Democrats' assistance. And we will be moving forward with the final steps of that process shortly.

As I said at the top of my remarks, I wanted to restore regular order, bipartisan consideration of funding bills, and we were doing that. And despite Democrats' partisan games, we are still going to get the entire Federal Government funded. We are going to ensure our immigration laws are enforced and criminal illegal aliens are not allowed to live freely in our country.

And if Democrats want to play partisan games and vote against border security, well, they are free to do that. But Republicans are going to do our jobs and ensure that law enforcement can do theirs.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, it has been a hell of a bad week for Donald Trump and his Republicans, maybe the worst week they have ever had. Bugged down by Donald Trump's stunningly corrupt MAGA slush fund, Trump's billion-dollar, taxpayer-funded ballroom, and the recordbreaking gas costs as we approach the Memorial Day weekend, Republicans are having a terrible, terrible week—one that may even rival the week they had when they passed their so-called Big Beautiful Bill, which America hated. And it is only Wednesday. It is only Wednesday. But however bad this week is for Republicans—and, believe me, it is bad—it has been even worse for the American people.

First, on Trump's nearly \$2 billion MAGA slush fund—credible depravity, disgusting selfishness—yesterday, Trump's Department of Justice expanded the settlement he made with himself, granting him and his family immunity from tax audits.

Did you hear that, America? Trump just gave his family a license to commit tax fraud to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars, if not more. He is using nearly \$2 billion, America, of your taxpayer dollars that he has placed in a slush fund to enrich his MAGA loyalists. Trump doesn't have to pay his taxes, and meanwhile, he is using your tax dollars, America, to line the pockets of his family and his far-right cronies.

The naked corruption, something as low and depraved as we have ever seen, is absolutely egregious. Only in Trump's Washington could a President sue himself, settle with himself, and somehow stick the American people with the bill. Who would have thought that even a man as depraved and low as Donald Trump, as dishonest and as selfish, would do something like this? Trump's slush fund is a heist where the robber owns the bank, runs the police

department, and gets to pardon himself on the way out.

Just as egregious as how Trump stole this money is who he plans to give it to: his billionaire cronies, convicted criminals, and the cop beaters who maimed our brave U.S. Capitol Police on January 6. Meanwhile, Trump is making a deal with himself, shaking hands with himself on a corrupt deal as he shakes down the American people.

Republican Senators should make no mistake—Democrats are going to force Republican Senators to vote on this slush fund on the floor in the upcoming reconciliation bill in the next day or two. Republicans will not be able to duck or hide.

Republicans, are you for the slush fund—this evil, corrupt slush fund—or are you against it? Are you going to bow down to Donald Trump when you know how egregious, how despicable, how nasty, how disgusting this slush fund is? Will you bow down to Trump? Will you vote for the slush fund or against it?

Democrats are going to force Republicans to take a stand in the next day.

Now, a second chapter—the next chapter that is part of Trump's terrible, terrible week is the ballroom. Yesterday, Donald Trump defended his billion-dollar, gold-plated, taxpayer-funded ballroom, calling it "a gift to the United States of America." A gift? Let's call Trump's ballroom what it is: a boondoggle, a vanity project, an insult to every American—especially those struggling to make ends meet right now. This ballroom is no gift to the American people; it is a congressional Republican personal gift to Donald J. Trump—right. It is the Republican Senators here in this Chamber giving Donald Trump the personal gift of a billion-dollar ballroom.

Trump said yesterday—again, he just lies—Trump said yesterday that the ballroom is not going to be paid for by the taxpayer. Then why have Americans watched Republicans work around the clock on proposal after proposal to grant \$1 billion to build Trump's ballroom, all at the taxpayers' expense? When Trump says it "is not going to be paid for by the taxpayer," it is flagrant, shameless lying. He is very good at that.

Fortunately, Democrats stopped Republicans' first attempt to fund the ballroom through reconciliation, but rest assured the Senate GOP is working to take money out of your paycheck to finance Trump's palace, America.

Republicans are in such disarray as they scramble over the ballroom, now they are slow-walking the whole process. We still don't have a reconciliation bill on our desks.

Regardless of whether the ballroom funding makes it into the reconciliation bill—and Democrats will keep fighting to ensure that it doesn't—Republicans have already showed America their true colors. While Democrats are fighting to lower Americans' costs,

Republicans are fighting like hell to waste billions of dollars on things taxpayers do not want, do not need, and certainly should not be forced to pay for. That is true of the billion-dollar ballroom. That is true of the tens of billions of dollars the Republican bill would give to Trump's masked agents, who have gunned down Americans in the streets. It is true of the whole GOP entire agenda.

Republicans can change the pricetag of the ballroom. They tried to rewrite the text. They even attempted to hide this boondoggle in the bill, but we caught them. Republicans will not be able to distance themselves from this corruption. Democrats will make sure of that. No matter what happens, we will make sure the American people know where Republicans stand. We will make sure Republicans have to go on the record and show what they are really fighting for when we vote this week: Trump's gilded palace—not working families, not lower costs, not for the American people.

The American people want lower costs. They are giving money to the ballroom. They are giving money to the slush fund. How out of touch are they? How harmful are they to the average working family's interests?

Then, the third part of Trump's terrible, terrible, terrible week is the continuing increase in gas prices. As Americans pack up the car and fire up the grill ahead of Memorial Day, they are getting crushed by the skyrocketing costs of Trump's disastrous war in Iran.

With gas selling for over \$4.50 a gallon, up nearly 45 percent—45 percent—since this time last year, many Americans are canceling their Memorial Day plans because they simply can't afford to drive.

Americans can't afford a barbecue when the cost of the beef they put on the grill and the propane they use to fuel it are both going up too.

Republicans ought to take note that among the States that have seen the greatest increase in gas prices since the war are the battleground States of Ohio, Michigan, and Alaska. One report says those are the three highest. They are the battleground States.

What did Donald Trump have to say yesterday about these surging gas prices across the country? He said:

This is peanuts.

Can you believe this guy? Donald Trump thinks the hundreds of extra dollars Americans are shelling out at the gas station each month are peanuts, a pittance.

What does he know? Does he ever fill up his own tank with gas? No.

Trump should tell the American people that he thinks it is a pittance and tell that to America's small businesses, which suffered their biggest decline in 2 years, last month, because of the surge in costs.

Trump should tell that to American farmers, who are struggling to afford fuel for their tractors and agriculture

equipment, after facing rising costs from tariffs and now increased costs of fertilizer.

The GOP continues to stand by Donald Trump's handling of this war, but the cracks are starting to form.

Yesterday, Democrats convinced enough Republicans to break ranks and advance our War Powers Resolution to end Trump's war. Our vote on our War Powers Resolution yesterday was an important step toward ending Trump's war, but we won't stop pushing and pushing and pushing until Republicans finally join us in ending this reckless war. Democrats are going to keep the pressure up.

In conclusion, this has been a terrible week—a terrible, terrible week—for Donald Trump and Republicans, and it will get only worse for our Senate Republicans during vote-arama because Democrats are going to force Senate Republicans to vote on amendment after amendment about Trump's ballroom, Trump's slush fund, and the rising costs of Trump's war. They are not going to be able to hide.

The American people are going to see the clear difference between the parties. We are for working people. We are for getting costs down, going after corruption, ending the chaos. And yet they, by backing Donald Trump, make all three worse.

I encourage the American people to watch this debate, though they already know what they will see: Republicans fighting for Trump, Democrats fighting to lower costs.

And, finally, to make matters even worse for this terrible, terrible week for Republicans, I will utter one final word: Texas.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

SECURE AMERICA ACT

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I have a simple message for the dedicated men and women of ICE and Border Patrol: Help is on the way.

You spent the last 5 months guarding our borders and protecting our communities. You were defunded by the Democrats. You were demonized by members of the media. Your homes and your families were threatened by radicals.

Courageously, you carried out your mission. And you do it with patriotism, professionalism, and resolve. Your commitment makes America safer. Republicans are fighting to send you the support you need, as you continue to do your duty.

For the first time in 4 years, the United States now has a secure border.

Under Joe Biden and the Democrats, 10 million illegal immigrants flooded into our country. Democrats' catch-and-release policies turned every State into a border State.

Today, under Republicans, catch-and-release has been replaced with detain-and-deport. Zero illegal immigrants have entered our Nation in the past year. Hundreds of illegal immigrant criminals are being removed each and every week.

In just 2 weeks last month, officers in Houston arrested 277 illegal immigrant criminals—criminals who had been convicted of a total of 751 offenses. This isn't an innocent group of people. It is convicted murders. It is child abusers. It is drug dealers. It is violent gang members.

This is just in one city—Houston, TX.

Let me state the obvious: Illegal immigrant criminals do not make our communities or our country safer. They make our communities more dangerous.

Republicans want the law to be upheld. We want to continue to remove illegal immigrant criminals from our communities.

And President Trump has made significant progress making communities safer. Republicans will protect this progress and keep it going into the future.

That is what this week is all about here in the U.S. Senate. Senate Republicans have introduced legislation to fully fund the men and women of immigration enforcement. It is called the Secure America Act.

The Secure America Act fully funds Immigrations and Customs Enforcement. It fully funds U.S. Border Patrol. It funds them for not 1 year, not 2 years, but 3 full years. It guarantees full funding for ICE and Border Patrol for the entire Presidency of President Trump.

This is an urgent priority.

Since January, Democrats have blocked critical funding for ICE. They have blocked critical funding for Border Patrol. Democrats continue to try to defund law enforcement in America at this very moment. Democrats don't respect law enforcement. They will not honor their sacrifice, and Democrats refuse to fund them.

Today's Democratic Party is more interested in protecting illegal immigrant criminals than it is in protecting law-abiding American citizens. Today's Democratic Party belongs to the radicals who want to abolish ICE and return to open borders. Democrats are willing to sacrifice the safety and security of the American people to illegal immigrant criminals.

That is why Republicans will fully fund law enforcement without a single Democrat vote. Republicans will pass the Secure America Act. This is a choice between safe communities and open borders. This is about protecting America's law-abiding citizens.