

And so there is no bill. That is why there is no bill. They are stuck. They are flummoxed.

The leader, Leader THUNE, has two choices: Side with Donald Trump and show the American people you are totally, totally out of touch with what they need, or side with the American people, work with us, and get Donald Trump furious at you. And you see what happens when Donald Trump is furious at Republicans. We could ask a couple of Senators what happens when they don't side with Donald Trump.

So they are stuck. They are just stuck, and it is a spectacle that the American people are witnessing.

And more and more Americans, every day, say the Republican Party—many former Republicans say: The Republican Party I used to know was so different.

It is so deranged by Donald Trump that they can't be with them anymore. And that is why we Democrats look like we are in good shape in the House and the Senate, as we move forward to November.

Republicans—let's go over what they want in their bill. Republicans want to spend tens of billions of American tax dollars, but we still don't know what exactly we are voting on in mere hours. We do know that this bill won't include a single penny to make life more affordable—the costs issue, which is No. 1 in the eyes of the American people.

The American people don't need to see the bill text to know where Senate Republicans stand: with Donald Trump, right now, not working families.

I am pleased a small number of Republicans are starting to wake up to how egregious Trump's billion-dollar, taxpayer-funded ballroom is, but this MAGA majority has made it abundantly clear they are willing and eager to fund Trump's vanity project at the taxpayers' expense.

Make no mistake, if ballroom funding doesn't make it into the Republican bill, it is not because of a Republican conscience; it is because Democrats stopped them. They tried to sneak it in. They were caught red-handed.

Oh, it is only for security. It is only for this. It is only for that.

They are stuck. No one wants the ballroom except Donald Trump, and they are quaking in their boots to oppose him. And when they oppose him, they are worried about electoral consequences, as we have seen in the last week.

Were it not for Democrats fighting this ballroom every step of the way, Republicans would have wasted a billion taxpayer dollars for Trump's palace in a heartbeat. Republicans are foolish if they think that they can distance themselves from this boondoggle, because, no matter what is in the bill, Democrats will force Republicans to vote again and again on their outrageous priorities: Trump's ballroom, Trump's insurrectionist slush fund, Trump's costly war.

Americans don't want this bill, even without Trump's vanity project—not when it provides \$70 billion to Trump's masked agents who sow chaos in the streets. It is absurd. It is absurd to ask Americans, who are struggling to make ends meet, to shell out another \$70 billion to ICE and Border Patrol when these rogue Agencies are sitting on \$100 billion from the Big Beautiful Bill.

But the costs of this war, which the American people are opposed to, and the costs of many other things might have to be funded out of this in the next few months, and so they don't want to take the money for ICE or for Border Patrol when there is \$100 billion sitting there. Instead, they hold up the budget. Instead, they tell Democrats there is no reform. They tell that to the American people as well.

As Americans burn through their savings, Republicans want to expand their nest egg for Trump's private militia. Every vote and every amendment we bring to the floor today will show that Democrats are standing up for the American people and Republicans are selling out to Trump. Again, the contrast is glaring: Who is on the side of the American people for lower costs and for less chaos and to end the corruption? And who is on the side of Donald Trump, master of corruption, originator of corruption in certain new, novel, and disgusting ways, as well as somebody who doesn't give a damn about the costs that the American people are suffering through?

On the slush fund, Donald Trump's nearly \$2 billion MAGA slush fund is the most blatant act of corruption in American history. People are aghast. Jaws drop all over the Nation when they hear what Trump wants to do: sue the government for \$10 billion—that is him personally suing—then settle with himself and use that money for his cronies and Lord knows what else. As I said, I believe a lot of it will end up in the pockets of Trump, his family, his cronies.

Trump sues Trump. Trump settles with Trump. Trump decides which Trump allies get paid. It is absolutely depraved.

It turns out that "The Art of the Deal" isn't very hard when you are making a deal with yourself and forcing Americans to foot the bill. Let's see what his next book says about that one.

Trump acted as the plaintiff, defendant, and judge, all at once, to set up this slush fund. And while Trump was at it, he shielded his family from ever having to face a tax audit again.

Can you believe this, America? In this bill, Trump can never be prosecuted, investigated for tax fraud, even though I and so many others wouldn't trust him with his tax returns for a minute.

Trump doesn't have to pay his taxes, but he is more than happy to put your tax dollars in the pockets of his cronies, criminals, and cop-killing January 6 insurrectionists.

Republicans are going to have to vote on that. Are you going to prevent any of this money from going to people who hurt cops, who were prosecuted for hurting cops? Trump's own Attorney General, Pam Bondi, instituted a rule last year explicitly prohibiting these types of corrupt payments, and Democrats will not let Trump get away with this grift—this grift of epic proportion.

That is why the very first amendment I will offer during vote-arama will be to block this slush fund—all of it. Republicans will have to answer on my amendment: Are they for the slush fund or are they against it? Do Republicans want to lower Americans' costs or sell them out to give payments to violent criminals? Do Republicans stand with the American people or with Donald Trump?

Americans want to know. Democrats will force Republicans to answer.

COST OF LIVING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on costs, ahead of the Memorial Day weekend, Americans drive to the grocery store and can't believe the prices they are seeing for beef, for propane, for the gas to get there. It is hard to enjoy a barbecue when rising costs are stretching your budget to the breaking point.

Just look at costs for the menu compared to last year: a pound of beef, up nearly 20 percent; hot dogs, 12 percent; a rack of ribs, 8 percent; buns, up 20 percent; ketchup, up 14 percent; watermelon, 17 percent; lettuce, 19 percent; tomatoes, up 22 percent. And the price of gasoline is up 42 percent compared to this time last year, thanks to Trump's disastrous war with Iran.

At a time when Americans should be gathering together in celebration, they are getting crushed by surging costs. And Republicans don't include a single bent penny in their reconciliation bill to bring down prices—outrageous, clueless, and it will come back to bite Republicans.

While Republicans have been working around the clock to line Trump's pockets, Democrats are fighting every second of the day to lower Americans' costs.

And since millions of Americans won't be able to grill this weekend, Democrats are going to grill Republicans over and over again during the vote-arama with amendments to lower Americans' costs.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF MAY 2026 AS “RENEWABLE FUELS MONTH”

Mr. RICKETTS. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the benefits of renewable fuels. My State of Nebraska is a leader in renewable fuels. We have 24 ethanol plants, for example, to create 2.2 billion gallons of ethanol.

And that, according to the Renewable Fuels Association, has allowed us to avoid importing about 640 million barrels of foreign oil. Renewable fuels are great for consumers to help save you money at the pump. Last time I filled up with a 10-percent blend of ethanol, I saved 55 cents a gallon at my local grocery store.

My Congressman has told me that he fills up with E15 and was able to save \$1 a gallon. It is also great for cleaning up the environment. It reduces carbon emissions and particulate emissions, NO_x emissions. And then, of course, it is great for our farmers and ranchers.

Renewable fuels are part of an “America First” energy dominant strategy. They are great for our country. To that end, I would want to make May “Renewable Fuels Month,” as I did in Nebraska when I made that proclamation when I was Governor.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 747, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 747), expressing support for the designation of May 2026 as “Renewable Fuels Month” to recognize the important role that renewable fuels play in lowering fuel prices for consumers, lessening reliance on foreign adversaries, supporting rural communities, and reducing carbon impacts.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. RICKETTS. I know of no further debate on the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

Hearing no further debate, the question is on adoption of the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 747) was agreed to.

Mr. RICKETTS. I ask unanimous consent that the preamble be agreed to and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

RECESS

Mr. RICKETTS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess until 12 noon today.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 11:03 a.m., recessed until 12 noon and

reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. TUBERVILLE).

MORNING BUSINESS—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ARMSTRONG). The Senator from California.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 3582

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, this past January on the fifth anniversary of the January 6 insurrection, I introduced a bill called the No Rewards for January 6 Rioters Act because, as we know, one of the first things Donald Trump did when he returned to office was to pardon every person convicted of crimes connected to the January 6 insurrection in 2021.

That is right, not just those accused of crimes, those convicted in a court of law by a jury of their peers. But for Donald Trump, that abuse of the Constitution’s pardon powers was just the beginning. And since then there has been a concerted effort to keep going even further, to not only try to rewrite the history of that awful day, but to raid taxpayer funds to actually reward those who ransacked the Capitol, those who assaulted law enforcement officers, who called for the hanging of Vice President Pence along with Members of Congress, and those who tried to stop the peaceful transfer of power.

And so, sadly, it was not exactly surprising when, earlier this week, Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche announced a corrupt settlement creating a special \$1.8 billion slush fund for Donald Trump to reward his supporters, including the perpetrators of the January 6 attacks.

And January 6ers being able to receive money from this fund isn’t some loophole or unintended consequence. Let me cite a few people. Ed Martin the Department of Justice pardon attorney whose nomination to be U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia was rejected by the Senate, that Ed Martin, made it clear that this fund’s explicit purpose publicly declaring last year that “you’re damn right I want to pay J6ers.” That is Ed Martin.

The leader of the Proud Boys says he expects a \$2 to \$5 million payout. Another January 6 convict told CNN he plans to claim \$30 million from the public treasury. And one other stated “[A]ll January 6ers will apply for restitution” from the Department of Justice’s funds. “All of us . . . it’s all over Twitter [and] our group chats.”

So to be clear, “all of us” he means includes the many attackers who have not just been convicted of crimes related to January 6 but even after they have been pardoned by the President have been convicted of additional serious crimes, including one man who tried to bribe a child who he sexually abused to stay quiet with the promise of this exact kind of payout.

Now, the American people have seen a lot of egregious things since Donald Trump first came down that golden escalator in Trump Tower to announce he was running for President, but

never—never—have we witnessed something this brazenly corrupt, an American President effectively suing and negotiating with himself to create a taxpayer-funded slush fund to funnel taxpayer dollars to his friends and allies. This cannot be allowed to stand, colleagues.

Now, I’m encouraged to hear some of my Republican colleagues agreeing with me, beginning with Majority Leader THUNE who said he is “not a big fan” of this proposal.

Another Republican colleague saying “People are concerned about making their own ends meet, not about putting a slush fund together without a legal precedent. We’re a nation of laws. If there needs to be a settlement, let’s consider it and Congress should come together and decide upon that.”

A third Republican Senator said “I’ve never heard of someone negotiating with themselves and making a plea bargain with themselves, so I think there’s no precedent for it.”

Finally, former Vice President Pence himself has said “It would be my hope that anyone who engaged in violence against law enforcement or at the Capitol building would never be rewarded with taxpayers’ money.”

Colleagues, this situation is so outlandish. Some might say it is laughable, but it is not. What it is: it is urgent and it is dangerous. Because if the Republican majorities in Congress, both in the Senate and the House, let this happen, then in less than 60 days, \$1.8 billion will be transferred from the judgment fund to this new slush fund, which Congress would have no control over and no oversight over.

Senate Democrats saw this coming months ago, but the time to stop it is now before it is too late, which is why today I am bringing up my No Rewards for January 6 Rioters Act. Let’s stand up for congressional oversight as a unified Senate. Let’s pass this bill and prevent corruption payouts before they happen.

Mr. President, and so I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 3582. I further ask consent the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

January 6, 2021 was my first day here on the job in the U.S. Senate. Let’s be clear about what happened that day. Let’s go back and look at it. Democrats and the deep state, they hated Donald Trump so much that they orchestrated a coup against our government. Let me explain this.

It first started with the tampering of the 2020 Presidential election results to oust President Trump and to install the woke globalists’ favorite Joe Biden.