government; they know better than we do as taxpayers. That is not what the American people want.

Here is what Republicans are doing: We are protecting taxpayers. We are putting more money back in their pockets so they can decide how to spend it, how to save it, and what to invest in. We are fighting the fraud. And that is what I hear about so much in Wyoming—the fraud in Democrat States that Democrats ignore, that Democrats enable. It is awful fraud. You look at it and say: How can this continue?

Just this week, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent announced that we stopped nearly $100 million in taxpayer money from going to dead people—going to dead people.

Just yesterday, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services stopped more than $1 billion in Medicaid funding from going to California and Minnesota. Why? Because of fraud and failure to comply with the regulations to make sure that the money is actually not wasted, that the money is spent as it is supposed to be—taking care of people who need those services, and there are people who need those services. Every time a fraudster takes $1 or $100 or $1,000 or $1 million, that is services that don't go to people that need them, desperately need them.

Here in the Senate, Senator JONI ERNST of Iowa is a leader in the war on fraud. When it comes to exposing that fraud, Senator ERNST is both a watchdog and an attack dog. She has proposed a comprehensive anti-fraud piece of legislation. Her bill cracks down on fraud. It claws back stolen money. It prosecutes the crooks and the criminals and the scammers who prey upon the taxpayers. I support what Senator ERNST is doing. I am a cosponsor. Her anti-fraud legislation would save taxpayers $240 billion. That is what kind of fraud is out there.

Senator SCHUMER recently said on this very floor that Democrats want to fight corruption. It is time for Democrats to prove it.

Republicans are cutting taxes. We are stopping fraud. Democrats, on the other hand, are voting to raise taxes and, up until now, have been protecting the fraud.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to react to the statement of my friend and colleague from Wyoming. I am against fraud. That is it. On the record: I am against fraud. I am a Democrat, and I don't know where he reached this different conclusion, but I want to make it very clear.

Having said that, I am also a realist. I know that the families I represent in Illinois and across the Nation are facing budgets, family budgets, which are impossible to live with. They are not only struggling paycheck to paycheck, they are also watching the price of groceries go up. They know the price of gasoline goes up and down, and now it is on the upward trend because of the President's war in Iran. Utility bills in my State are up 15 percent this year over last year because of President Trump's energy policy, which is opposed to sustainable, renewable sources of energy, which are the most affordable. The list goes on and on.

The Big Beautiful Bill, which Republicans brag about, was a bill that ended up with millions of Americans losing their health insurance because the cost of premiums had gone up too high.

So I think it is just great that we have tipped income exempt from taxes and that other breaks are given to working people. I would support those any day. But the bill that created those also gave the biggest tax cuts in the history of the United States to the wealthiest people in the United States—nothing, very little, for families in comparison. That is the difference.

I think we ought to be honest with the American people. The No. 1 issue in this campaign is the affordability that families worry about every single week. There is an issue I am going to address here more particularly, which gets to the heart of this as well.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr. President, in 1983, I was elected to the House of Representatives. I was a freshman Congressman and as nervous as any politician could be. I had defeated a Republican incumbent to come to the House, and I was just sure, looking over my shoulder, there was an issue, a press release, a vote that was going to do me in in the next election. I was as nervous as could be.

In the midst of that situation, I had a visit from the leaders of the U.S. House of Representatives, and they said: Congressman DURBIN, there is news for you which may decide your fate in the years to come.

I said: What is it?

Social Security is about to go broke. In 1983, we faced the possibility that we would not be able to make the promised Social Security payments to beneficiaries across America.

I couldn't imagine a tougher challenge. One of the most popular programs in America, one out of five Americans on Social Security—and in 1983, it faced the situation where they couldn't make their payments as promised.

And so I proposed a Commission to take a look at it—a bipartisan Commission—and come up with changes in Social Security in 1983: raise the retirement age, raise the amount of money paid by employers and employees into Social Security, and tax income from Social Security for the first time.

These changes were not easy. Some were controversial, but we knew we had to do it. Our goal was to buy 50 years of solvency for Social Security with the changes in 1983. You know, what? It worked.

It worked to the point where we just had an announcement last week by the trustees in bankruptcy that the system will make every payment promised until the end of 2032—50 years after the 1983 changes were made.

So the promise was kept, but then the problems arise. After that, the Social Security trust fund will not have enough money to pay the promised benefits.

What does that mean? Well, go back to my notation that one out of five Americans receive Social Security—either elderly or disabled receive Social Security. Out of those, one out of five of the recipients of Social Security have no other source of income.

The average Social Security check in America is about $2,400 a month. The announcement, according to the trustees, is each one of those recipients will see their monthly paycheck cut between $450 and $500. So if $2,400 is the average payment and there is a cut of $400 to $500, you can imagine the impact it will have on families. They will be making some very difficult decisions because one out of five, as I mentioned, Social Security recipients have no other source of income. They depend on Social Security.

What happens when those people lose $450 to $500 a month? They have to make hard decisions on prescription drugs; on paying some utility bills and not others; on groceries—what they are able to buy, if anything. So it boils down to a very terrible situation, a terrible challenge.

So the obvious question from the American people, just those receiving Social Security today as well as those that will in the future is, What is Congress going to do about it now? In 1983, you responded with 50 years of solvency by changing the policy. What is the plan in the current situation where we face another dramatic situation with Social Security?

And the answer is, if you look at the agenda of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives, this year we are going to do little or nothing—little or nothing.

Why is it important that we move now instead of waiting another year, 2, 3 years before we do something? It becomes more expensive and more difficult the longer you wait to fix Social Security. The sooner you do it, the easier it is.

And it won't be totally easy. There will be some changes people will like and some they won't like. But the bottom line is, the longer Congress waits to act on Social Security, the more expensive it will be, the more difficult the policy choices will be.

I have reached out to several of my colleagues saying: Can we finally agree, as Democrats and Republicans, that the No. 1 social policy of the U.S. Government, Social Security, should be a bipartisan issue that we address?

Well, it turns out that four Republicans joined me as well as three other Democrats, and we have eight members, Democrats and Republicans, who are supporting the bill that I call the PROMISE Act.

What is the PROMISE Act? Is it the solution to the problem with Social Security? No, but it is a procedure so that we can reach that solution.

Here is what it says: We are going to set up a system where the Social Security Advisory Board sends us a proposed change in Social Security. That is the starting point—just the starting point—for hearings and for a national discussion about where we want Social Security to go at the end of 2032.

That does not presume any solution. There are many Senators who have come up with ideas on what to do with Social Security—some surprising. A Republican Senator from Ohio joined a Democratic Senator from Massachusetts just 2 weeks ago, and they came up with a bipartisan proposal to save Social Security beyond 2032. The same thing has been offered by the Senator from Vermont and other Senators. They have ideas. The junior Senator from Rhode Island has a proposal as well.

What I am trying to do is not to pick the winners and losers, not to choose one plan over others but to create a process on the floor where we actually, physically, verbally debate the issue.

Trust me, Congress is not overworked. The House of Representatives taking off this week for 4 or 5 weeks of being back home for the August recess is fine. We do it every year. But before they leave, I think they should take up some procedure that says we are going to return to fix Social Security after the August recess.

The same thing should be true in the Senate. It is a bipartisan Senate in one respect, but the majority is on the Republican side. If they believe Social Security is important enough to make it a priority, let's put it on the legislative agenda when we return this year. Let's give peace of mind to the millions of Americans who currently live with Social Security benefits and those that work every week and every month paying into Social Security for their own retirement in the future.

This is not easy, but it is doable. I was part of that process many years ago, and I want to be part of it again before I retire at the end of this year.

So we have a bipartisan procedure. It does not assume any changes. It basically says we have to reach a point where we pass something that gives us another 50 years of solvency for Social Security.

It is not too much to ask. I have seen it done. I voted for it 50 years ago, and I am prepared to vote again if we have—not quite 50 years ago. It was 44 years ago I did it, and I would do it again. It is a challenge, which I think we can meet. We have the bipartisan starting point: the PROMISE Act.

I want to see, I hope, a bipartisan vote to set up that procedure that we will return to in September or October of this year so that we get something done and we give peace of mind to the people who are depending on Social Security for their future.

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

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

The Senator from Iowa.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor once again, as I have before, to discuss misleading reporting in the New York Times.

The New York Times has a global reputation. They work hard to maintain that. So I don't understand why their journalists can miss so many important facts. This time the misleading article was written by Devlin Barrett and a second one was written by Charlie Savage.

Barrett's article discusses the White House's release of government records about an alleged scheme by China to meddle in the 2020 election. The records at issue showed that FBI personnel suppressed intelligence of that alleged Chinese interference.

Barrett's article said, in part:

> Mr. GRASSLEY and others have cited the Albany memo as evidence that F.B.I. leaders covered up evidence that China might be taking aggressive steps to interfere with the U.S. election results in 2020, because admitting it might contradict prior testimony to Congress from then-F.B.I. Director Wray.

That is not what I said when I made those records public. That is what the FBI said 6 years ago.

The Albany memo, as the New York Times called it, is actually an FBI memo. It contained information from an FBI Confidential Human Source and was titled by the FBI. The titles by the FBI:

> Chinese Government Production and Export of Fraudulent U.S. Driver's Licenses to Chinese Sympathizers in the United States, in Order to Create Tens of Thousands of Fraudulent Mail-in Votes for US Presidential Candidate Joe Biden, in late August 2020.

End of the FBI title.

Let me emphasize what I said. The memo was an FBI memo based on an FBI Confidential Human Source. It was not a CHUCK GRASSLEY-created memo.

The FBI analyst involved said the FBI memo "was coordinated and disseminated in textbook fashion."

But based on the records the FBI provided to me, the allegations weren't fully investigated at the time because the FBI decided to recall its own memo.

The FBI also described the FBI's sources as competent and authentic with reporting. So let the FBI do their job and investigate.

An FBI analyst said in an email—and when I quote this email, the words "me" and "I" refer to the FBI analyst.

> Most concerning to me, is stating the reporting would contradict Director Wray's testimony. I found this troubling because it implied to me that one of the reasons we weren't putting this out is for a political reason, which goes directly against our organization's mission to remain apolitical and simply state what we know. . . . My concern is that I think it gets dangerous if we cite potential political implications as reasons for not putting out our information.

This FBI analyst raises legitimate concerns. Is the New York Times digging into those concerns? In other words, is the New York Times journalist doing what journalists should be doing? They ought to be good investigators, get all the facts.

And guess who was involved in recalling the FBI memo: That person was then-Deputy Assistant Director Nikki Floris. She was also the main briefer for the fake briefing Senator JOHNSON and I received in August of 2020 from the now-disbanded Foreign Influence Task Force. You will remember, that was the briefing that was used to attack the Grassley-Johnson Biden family investigation.

So I ask, Is the New York Times investigating that material connection?

By the way, my and Senator JOHNSON's investigation was based on authentic bank records, authentic Treasury records, authentic Obama administration records, and transcribed interviews. In other words, it was not Russian disinformation, as the partisan media tried and failed to argue.

Here, with this FBI memo, I released records last year because the facts and evidence ought to breathe. Let the American people see what is happening on their watch.

I also issued the records as support to those FBI agents and analysts who were just trying to do their job under extreme pressure from inside the FBI.

I don't know why people in the FBI care if the truth gets out, but a lot of people at the FBI get pressured not to let the truth out. And I want you to know that I will continue to make records public because that is what the taxpayers need and deserve and expect.

As I said last July about this same FBI memo:

> One way or the other, intelligence must be fully investigated to determine whether it's true, or if it's just smoke and mirrors.

End of this Senator's quote from last July. That is a quote, by the way, that the New York Times failed to mention.

Now, turning to the Savage article from the New York Times, Charlie Savage wrote in part:

> Since President Trump returned to office last year, the senator—

Referring to CHUCK GRASSLEY—

> has released a flood of internal law enforcement files that normally would be off limits to disclosure, sometimes attributing them to "whistle-blowers" or not saying who gave them to him.

The New York Times seems to be very obsessed with how I have obtained government records, maybe because they haven't been able to or maybe they haven't even tried to get these records. For too many years, the executive branch, under both Republicans