

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY  
LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, so last week, the Senate did its job to fund 96 percent of the government, while splitting the DHS bill from the rest of the funding package so we can rein in ICE and end the violence. Now, it is the House's turn to do its job, but a band of MAGA radicals want to highjack government funding to push an outlandishly toxic bill called the SAVE Act that would disenfranchise millions of American citizens.

Just a few hours ago, Donald Trump said he wants to nationalize elections around the country. That is what Trump said—you think he believes in democracy? He said, "We want to take over . . . the Republicans ought to nationalize the voting."

Does Donald Trump need a copy of the Constitution? What he is saying is outlandishly illegal. Once again, the President is talking no differently than a dictator who wants elections in America to be as legitimate as elections in countries like Venezuela.

And make no mistake, one of the tools to nationalize elections is precisely the SAVE Act that some Republicans are pushing in the House. I want to be very clear: The SAVE Act is dead on arrival in the Senate, and every single Senate Democrat will vote against any bill—any bill—that contains it.

It is outrageous that House Republicans would even consider putting in the SAVE Act in legislation to fund the government.

Democrats have been clear for months. We will never in a million years consider this deeply restrictive and overreaching piece of legislation. Republicans who are pushing for the SAVE Act are trying to kill the funding bill and prolong this shutdown. That is all they want. They want to kill the bill, kill the funding bill, and have a prolonged shutdown.

Speaker JOHNSON should tell these SAVE Act Republicans to stand down, or else this shutdown is on the Republicans' shoulders.

Now, as for the SAVE Act itself, it has nothing to do with protecting our elections and everything to do with federalizing voter suppression. The SAVE Act is nothing more than Jim Crow 2.0. If the SAVE Act were to become law, online registration, registration by mail, and registration drives become a thing of the past. If you are one of tens of millions of Americans who does not have access to your birth certificate or if you are one of the 50 percent of Americans who don't have a passport, the SAVE Act could make it impossible for you to participate in elections. It would lead to massive purges that inevitably remove legitimate American citizens who have a

right to vote from voter rolls. And even married couples aren't spared from the SAVE Act. If you get married and you change your last name, you too would be at risk under the SAVE Act of getting booted off the voter rolls.

This is just an outrageous piece of legislation. It is turning the clock back 100 years. It comes out of some right-wing brain that believes that certain people really shouldn't vote, that some citizens are more valuable than others.

So let me be clear as I can: The SAVE Act is dead on arrival in the Senate.

Hear that, House rightwingers? It ain't happening. Anyone who is trying to push the SAVE Act as part of the government funding is pining for a shutdown.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND  
SECURITY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now as for reining in ICE, right now Americans from all walks of life—left, right, and center—agree that the status quo with ICE cannot continue and Congress needs to make a change. What is happening in Minneapolis and other cities around the country is not law and order. It is thuggery—thuggery.

Here is what former border control head Greg Bovino said recently in a video that circulated online:

Arrest as many people [who] touch you as you want to. Those are general orders, all the way to the very top.

That is the rhetoric of police states. That is precisely the abuse that Congress needs to stop. That is why we were so intent on splitting off the Homeland Security bill from the rest of the funding bills, so we could focus on it, so we could rein it in—rein in ICE—and end the violence.

Republicans need to take a good look at what is happening around the country and realize, too, that it is time to rein in ICE's abuses. We should be going after "the worst of the worst," as the administration says, instead of unleashing fear and chaos on everybody else.

What Democrats want is exceedingly reasonable. We need to end roving patrols. That means arrest warrants and ending racial profiling.

Second, we need real accountability, having ICE abide by the same rules as local police do, including independent investigations of ICE.

And, third, masks need to come off. Cameras need to stay on. Officers need visible ID. No secret police.

These changes are as common sense as it gets. There is nothing insane, as some Republicans think, asking Federal agents to respect the Fourth Amendment. It does not criminalize law enforcement to ask them to identify themselves and follow the same basic code as other law enforcement.

This idea that JOHNSON has that ICE people should be able to wear masks—police officers don't wear masks all across the country. And if anyone

needs to be identified, it is these abusive thugs who are in the Border Patrol, who are in ICE.

If Republicans can't come to the table on these very sensible changes, then the violence we see happening around the country is going to continue.

EPSTEIN FILES

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, finally, on Epstein, the only real conclusion we can make about the latest release of the Epstein files is this: The DOJ cares more about protecting Donald Trump than it cares about protecting Epstein's victims.

These new releases expose the identity of nearly 100 victims in over 1,000 instances. This is not mere sloppiness. This is wanton negligence that puts the safety of these victims at risk. It is one thing for DOJ to miss a couple of redactions here or there—and that is still bad—but to fail thousands of times to protect people's identities begs the question of whether this was intentional.

And, look, the DOJ's failure to protect the identities of the victims is bad enough, but what makes it even more heinous is how far the DOJ went to protect Donald Trump during these releases. The DOJ took down pages and pages of documents that were full of vulgar accusations against the President. And when they got caught, they put the documents back up without redacting the information of the victims.

If DOJ cared half as much about protecting Epstein's victims as they cared about shielding Donald Trump, then maybe the public would trust them more. But right now, there is zero trust that the DOJ is being on the level.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority whip.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND  
SECURITY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, last month, America watched in horror as Federal immigration officers shot and killed, in two separate incidents, U.S. citizens as part of the Trump administration's immigration enforcement operations in Minneapolis. Renee Good and Alex Pretti should still be with us today.

Remember why we went there? The stated purpose, according to the Trump administration, was very clear and understandable. We were going after the rapists, murderers, terrorists, child predators, and criminally insane who had come across the border illegally during the Biden administration. They were to be found and removed and held accountable for their conduct.

No matter where you are on the political spectrum, that mission sounded sensible. Why would we ever allow those dangerous people in the country either by accident or intention, and why wouldn't we do everything we could to remove them?

The President promised he was going after “the worst of the worst”—“the worst of the worst.” So two people in Minneapolis lost their lives. Were they “the worst of the worst”?

Renee Good, mother of three, and Alex Pretti, a nurse at the VA hospital in Minneapolis, an extraordinary person, as we have come to know—American citizens, both—neither one of them fit the categories that the President railed against during his rallies and campaign. Instead, these two innocent people were taken from their families and their communities, far too soon, in instances of senseless violence at the hands of the U.S. Government.

Donald Trump’s immigration enforcement operations have not restored the so-called law and order that he promised and have not targeted “the worst of the worst.” They have done exactly the opposite. In every place the Department of Homeland Security’s roving squads have descended—whether Chicago, Minneapolis, or any other city—they have brought chaos, disorder, and fear. These operations have created a public safety crisis, with families terrified to leave their homes.

I have seen it firsthand in Chicago. I go into the Hispanic areas of that great city, and the people are living in fear. They are afraid to leave their homes. Parents and school administrators are struggling to explain ICE attacks to children, and Americans are desperately trying to protect their neighbors.

The American people support orderly immigration enforcement that removes violent criminals from our streets, but how we do it matters. Indiscriminate violent roundup of American citizens, legal residents, and people with no criminal record erodes civil liberties and threatens the rule of law.

The American people have seen this play out with their own eyes, and they have had enough. This is the time to rein in this lawlessness now. Congress has 2 weeks to act. With the support of the American people, Senate Democrats stood firm and made clear we would not provide the votes to increase funding for the administration’s illegal terror campaign.

I am pleased to say that last Friday night, the Senate passed five remaining bipartisan appropriations bills, and all the bills together that we have passed fund 96 percent of the Federal Government. Over the course of the next 2 weeks, we will continue to negotiate with the White House and Republicans to deliver much needed reforms to the DHS appropriations bill and to rein in the illegal excesses of ICE.

As part of those negotiations, Democrats stand strong for the following commonsense measures. First, Federal immigration agents need to remove their masks, turn on their body cameras, and wear visible, clear identification. I have met with law enforcement officials—people who have given their lives to it, career people—and asked them: Why do you need to be masked?

Why do you need to have secret police in the United States of America?

They said: You don’t.

Unfortunately, it undermines public confidence in law enforcement across the board. To allow these masks and to not require carrying video cameras is to invite the problems which we have already witnessed.

ICE is not a secret police force. It wasn’t meant to be, despite what President Trump may wish.

Second, we need to end the roving patrols. ICE does not have free will to do as they please. This is a nation of laws, guided by the Constitution that everyone, including ICE, must abide by. This means Federal immigration officials must stop racial profiling and random arrests.

You have seen the videotapes, and I have as well. In a Home Depot parking lot, a Latina—Hispanic woman—gets out of the car and starts to walk into the store and is stopped by ICE agents who want her to show proof of her citizenship. That kind of thing is not what we expect in America but, rather, in authoritarian regimes, which have no respect for individuals.

They cannot detain Americans for hours or use excessive force against them just because they peacefully protested in support of neighbors and friends.

ICE squads descending on homes, bursting through doors to conduct arrests, isn’t just violent and frightening, but it is unconstitutional. Agents must obtain a judicial warrant signed by a neutral judge, not an administrative warrant in-house, to enter private property.

You have seen the videos—we have all seen them—where they are trying to crash down doors by hitting them with axes. Those individuals don’t have the authority to do that.

What I am quoting—the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution—is black-letter constitutional law.

Third, we need accountability. ICE and Border Patrol squads can’t indiscriminately smash in car windows, use tear gas on protesters, and shoot at people without accountability. This is America. This is unacceptable.

A uniformed code of conduct will rein in aggressive and excessive immigration enforcement to bring about accountability and, hopefully, begin the long process of restoring trust. When the immigration agents fail to follow the code of conduct, the Department of Homeland Security must coordinate with State and local officials to conduct a fair and independent investigation.

In conclusion, as these negotiations continue to play out, I will continue to do my part to hold the administration accountable. After I asked Secretary Noem of the Department of Homeland Security to appear before the Senate Judiciary Committee all of last year, she refused. Now she says she just might be available in 4 weeks and find some time in her schedule to finally

appear before a congressional committee in a public hearing and answer questions, under oath, about her mismanagement—tragic mismanagement—of this Agency. She has a lot of explaining to do. We should hold her to account, both Democrats and Republicans.

My office will continue to document and report any and all instances of excessive force and abuse at the hands of immigration agents in Chicago and elsewhere.

As Federal District Court Judge Biery said in his order, this weekend, requiring the release of Liam Ramos from ICE detention, “Observing human behavior confirms that for some among us, the perfidious lust for unbridled power and the imposition of cruelty in its quest know no bounds and are bereft of human decency. And the rule of law be damned.”

What a condemnation of what is going on in Minneapolis and Chicago and other States.

It might be hard to imagine, but, one day, the Trump Presidency will end. The statute of limitations for these crimes, however, will extend beyond that date. When the day comes that Donald Trump leaves the White House and his successor moves in to finally bring some order to this chaos, there will be accountability. The Department of Justice, free from its weaponized quest of retribution against Trump’s perceived enemies, will have all the information it needs—video proof—to pursue criminal charges against government officials who actually are violating people’s rights.

In the meantime, my colleagues and I will continue to shine a light on these abuses, uphold the tenets of basic human decency, and defend the rule of law.

I urge my Republican colleagues to swiftly agree to these Democratic reforms in DHS funding so that we may actually put a check on the excesses of this administration and this national terror campaign.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BRITT). The majority leader.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 609.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Megan Blair Benton, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Missouri.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.