

What have American families done, what have the people who gave the President the privilege of serving in the highest office in our country done to have their biggest challenge, their greatest anxiety and fear dismissed by the President as a "hoax"?

Should we be surprised that a President who incited a mob to storm the Capitol and tried to overturn the voices and votes of the American people dismisses yet again what they have to say? Maybe the President would be more inclined to help the American people if they were a little less decent and a lot better connected. After all, this is President Trump's Washington, and we know well who this President is. He will save one of his corrupt campaign donors asking for a pardon, but he won't lift a finger to save American families a dime on their groceries.

And so I return to the President's promise. When he sought our country's highest office yet again, Donald Trump told the American people to put aside his corruption, his self-dealing, his poor character, his willingness to fan the flames of division and extremism, to forget the way he disrespects our veterans. He wanted us to even forget the attack on this Chamber, to forget the scars of the Capitol Police officers, forget all of this and more because he said he would bring down costs.

And now he is dismissive and contemptuous of anyone who asks him to make good on his pledge. He even undermines my Republican colleagues when they do try, in good faith, to lower costs. He actually threatened to block a bipartisan bill to bring down the cost of housing, a law that we were eventually able to pass.

Now, Donald Trump has made himself very, very clear. His Presidency will be defined not by lowering costs for families but by raising monuments to himself.

It doesn't have to be this way. The American people, right now, want an American dream that they can afford, a dream that doesn't belong just to a privileged few, a dream that is bigger than self-dealing, kickbacks, and self-enrichment schemes in the gilded rooms of Mar-a-Lago. The dreams of the American people aren't focused on golden luxury trappings. Their dreams are less gilded than all of that, but they are also far more noble.

Americans want their children to live better lives than they did; with quality, affordable healthcare that can help them rest easier at night; a decent education for their children; a place to build not a gilded ballroom but a home—a home in a country where we don't live fearing one another, divided over politics, but instead united as freedom-loving Americans who know that we are lucky to live in the greatest country on Earth, who love this country too much to ever hate our fellow Americans and who won't let the miracle of self-government die—not in the service of one man's ego, not for anything.

The American people want an America that is as good as this Nation's promise. They deserve a President whose word is as good as our people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

IRAN

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, colleagues, the Trump administration has us stuck in a humiliating quagmire, a total deadlock in Iran. We are wasting billions of taxpayer dollars dropping bombs and firing missiles at Iran.

Iran responds with escalation. They keep the strait closed. They attack our bases. They attack our allies in the region. The war just expands and expands and expands.

In the last week, for instance, a new war is threatening to break out between Yemen and Saudi Arabia, which would likely result in the other strait at the bottom of the Red Sea being closed as well.

Trump personally pays no price for this stalemate. His corruption schemes, his cryptocurrency, his insider trading, the contracts to his sons, all of that has practically tripled his net worth in just 18 short months in office.

No, the price of this war is being plainly paid, first and foremost, by our soldiers who are being put in harm's way for a war that is making America weaker every day.

They are getting killed. They are sustaining life-altering injuries. Many of our soldiers and sailors and airmen have been in the region far past their scheduled deployment. They haven't seen their families in years.

And, of course, American consumers are paying the price as well. Here is the most relevant chart. This is familiar to you. This is what gas prices were doing until the war. They are creeping back well above \$4 a gallon right now. That is not affordable for regular Americans, especially Americans who have to travel great distances for work, especially small business owners who rely on reasonable gas prices in order to be able to make their bills work.

Diesel prices are through the roof as well. Fertilizer prices are through the roof as well, all because of this war. No other reason—the war. The prices are this high because of the war. It is farmers, it is small business owners, it is the American public who are paying the price—not Donald Trump.

And so that is why the war is just wildly unpopular, like except for Trump's sort of hard-line supporters, the folks who just don't believe he can ever do anything wrong, nobody wants this war. If you are in a red State or a blue State, this war is deeply unpopular. The American public is smart; they are smarter than a lot of my colleagues give them credit for. They know a war with Iran is unwinnable. They don't want America stuck again in a quagmire, a stalemate in the Middle East.

So how does Trump handle this, a deeply unpopular war, a war that he is

losing, a war that is driving up prices for the American public? Well, this is how he handles it: He gaslights.

He tells lies. And the essential gaslight is that: The war is about to end, don't worry. Yes, it appears that there is no end. It appears that you are going to have to continue to pay these prices forever. It appears that America has no endgame, but, don't worry, the war is about to end.

And so I just want to go through this pattern with you because it is really important to talk about the fact that the White House is just not being straight with the American public about what is going on in this war.

Over and over again the President declares that the war is about to be over. He is not telling the truth. He normally declares that the war is about to be over on Sunday night or Monday morning, right before the markets open. But now that we are 6 months into this war, we can see the pattern.

Let me go through it with you quickly. On March 23, Trump announces a deal. I am just going to give you his quotes, these are his words. He says:

The United States of America, and the country of Iran, have had, over the last two days, very good and productive conversations regarding a complete and total resolution of our hostilities in the Middle East.

The market impact is immediate. That post sends oil prices tumbling nearly 11 percent, but there is no deal. He just made it up. Two days later, the U.S. military is back to conducting strikes.

USS *Abraham Lincoln* continues flight operations against military targets in Iran while sailing in regional waters.

On March 30, Trump announces another deal. This is Monday morning right before the markets open. He says:

The United States of America is in serious discussions with A NEW, AND MORE REASONABLE, REGIME to end—

end—

our Military Operations in Iran. Great progress has been made . . .

One week later, there is no deal. The opposite. One week later, Trump posts that he is going to wipe out the entire civilization of Iran, "A whole civilization will die tonight," he posts, "never to be brought back again."

That is a war crime. The President is promising to kill millions of civilians. He tries to dial it back, but later on that same day he is back to announcing a deal.

Literally, "I am going to wipe out a whole civilization," that morning.

That night, on April 17, he says:

We received a 10 point proposal from Iran, and believe it is a workable basis on which to negotiate . . . a two week period will allow the Agreement to be finalized and consummated.

Five days later, there is no deal. Trump announces a resumption of the war with Iran.

Now let's fast-forward 10 days later to April 17. He posts that a deal with Iran is imminent. "THIS PROCESS SHOULD GO VERY QUICKLY . . .

MOST OF THE POINTS ARE ALREADY NEGOTIATED," he posts.

Two days later, the strikes start again. On May 5, Trump says:

Great Progress [being] made toward a Complete and Final Agreement [with the Representatives of Iran.]

Complete is capitalized; final is capitalized; agreement is capitalized; representatives is capitalized; Iran is capitalized.

Two days later, the deal is off. Surprise, surprise. Every time Trump announces a deal is imminent, it just disappears.

"U.S. forces intercepted unprovoked Iranian attacks and responded with self-defense strikes," CENTCOM announces 2 days later.

On May 25, right before the markets open: A deal is imminent.

Negotiations with the Islamic Republic of Iran are proceeding nicely!

Right before the markets open. That same day the U.S. military conducts strikes on Iran:

U.S. forces conducted self-defense strikes in southern Iran today to protect troops from threats posed by Iranian forces.

Next Monday, right before the markets open, Trump posts:

Iran really wants to make a deal, and it will be a good one . . .

Just sit back and relax, it will work out well in the end—It always does!

How is this working out well for the American public? How is that working out well for the American public? The next day there is no deal. The United States conducts strikes against Iran.

On June 17, Trump actually signs the deal, but it is not a real deal. He does this whole pomp and circumstance signing ceremony in Versailles. That deal was negotiated by diplomatic amateurs. There was nothing actually agreed to. There were words on a page, but from the literal moment the ink was dry, nobody could explain what they had agreed to. Most significantly, Iran thought that the agreement obligated Israel to stop its military operations in Lebanon. Israel did not agree to that.

Iran thought that it had been given control of the strait in that agreement; apparently the American delegation didn't think they made that concession.

Anyway, that agreement lasts 10 days. On June 27, Trump posts that strikes on Iran have resumed.

Let's just fast-forward to the last week because Trump is doing it again. On August 1, Trump posts—I am not sure that I transcribed this wrong or not, but it looks like it says:

[T]he [perimeters] of a deal has been agreed to.

I will give him credit he said parameters.

"[T]he parameters of a deal have been agreed to," on August 1.

On August 2, "The deal is imminent, having to do with the [Strait of Hormuz] and also, ultimately, the denuclearization of Iran."

The deal is imminent on the denuclearization of Iran.

August 4, just a night or two ago, Trump tells Fox News:

We're having very good discussions.

Meanwhile, there were reports that Iran isn't even talking to the United States. Trump is saying a deal on the denuclearization of Iran is imminent, and Iran is saying: We are not even in the room.

I mean, we should not accept this level of gaslighting. The word of the President has to matter. Over and over again on 11 different instances, Trump says: A deal is about to happen, don't worry; the war is about to be over.

There is no deal. None of it is real, these promises. I wish it were real. I want to be clear about that. I want the war to end. I would basically support any agreement at this point to end this war.

I was glad that the President got a cease-fire, but I could tell by the terms it wasn't going to last. It wasn't a real agreement. But at this point, many of us are willing to support almost any agreement. It will be a humiliating agreement. It will be one in which Iran will essentially declare victory.

But this war is a disaster. America is losing. Consumers can't afford to pay these prices. Businesses are going under.

We had a record of farm bankruptcies in the last year. We look like a laughingstock, and we are running out of munitions. We don't have what we need to protect ourselves anymore.

Reports are that we have gone through half of our Tomahawks. Our allies in the region have fired 70 to 80 percent of their Patriot missiles. This is a crisis. It has to end.

But maybe there is an explanation for why Trump continues to do this gaslighting, particularly right before the markets open.

Trump announced now a week or so ago that if you pay him \$100,000 a month, he will give you advance notice of American foreign policy decisions.

I don't understand why that is acceptable to anybody in this Chamber. If you pay Donald Trump \$100,000, he will give you advance notice of America's foreign policy decisions.

If we are about to sign a peace treaty, and you give him \$100,000 a month, he will give you advance notice of that. If strikes are going to resume against Iran, if you pay him \$100,000 a month, he will give you advance notice of that. That is a subscription service for insider trading, and it is unquestionably lucrative.

On August 1, Trump posts that a deal is imminent. Remember, people still take him seriously. Not everybody knows about this history of gaslighting.

On August 1, Trump says that a deal is imminent, and the market impact is immediate. Oil prices fall by 5 percent right as the markets open.

The next day, right before the markets open, Trump says again "The deal is imminent"—another 5 percent drop.

And so you see how his statements move the market, and you can see how if you get advance notice of those statements, even by a few seconds, you can capitalize on that market movement. You know that if Trump says a deal is imminent and the markets are going to move 5 percent and you pay \$100,000 to Donald Trump to get that information early, you can make a boatload of money.

And so maybe the war continues because Trump has found a way to monetize the war in a disgustingly corrupt way. I get that at some point we become immune to all of this, but can any of my Republican colleagues defend the President selling announcements from the White House for \$100,000 a month in the middle of a war?

Is any Republican Senator willing to come down to this floor and defend the President of the United States setting up a subscription service for public policy announcements from the White House so as to advantage certain players in the marketplace who are willing to pay that amount of money?

Of course not. And if you know in your heart that it is corrupt, that it is wrong, then you should say something about it because the war might be continuing—not just because of incompetence but because the President has found a way to make money. More people are going to pay him \$100,000 for these announcements in the middle of a war. Frankly, people would be willing to pay it absent a war, but he will make more money during a war because his announcements clearly move the markets in the middle of a very complicated conflict where the decisions of the U.S. Government immediately change oil markets.

The reason this war is dragging on endlessly—it does matter, and my colleagues should care about Trump's insider trading subscription scheme. It is just so discouraging that nobody on the other side of the aisle says anything about this when the credibility of the White House and of our country is just getting destroyed and sullied. But my Republican colleagues should also care that the war is being waged with a level of embarrassing incompetence that is making America weaker, that is getting us nowhere.

This body works best when the President's party stands up to him and says "enough," whether it is corruption or incompetence. That is what Johnson's party did during the Vietnam war. It is actually what the Democratic Party did with President Obama during the late stages of the Afghanistan war when many of us decided that America had to withdraw and opposed President Obama's party. It is what many of us did here during the early stages of the war in Yemen that President Obama was bringing the American military into. Many of us opposed it, got up on this floor and explained why we opposed it.

Republicans can do that too. You can say that this war has to end. You can

say that the President should never ever personally benefit from a conflict overseas. You can say that the President of the United States should not sell access to White House statements. It would make a big difference for our democracy and for the American people, who are paying through the nose for the cost of this war, if you did.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. LUMMIS). The Senator from Florida.

TRIBUTE TO DEPUTY RAYMOND TELLEZ FERRIOL

Mrs. MOODY. Madam President, today, I have the honor of rising in recognition of a true Florida hero.

I know we hear a lot these days about entire political parties adopting platforms that want to defund and abolish the police, but in Florida, we do it a different way—an entirely different way. In fact, we watch what other crazy places are doing, and we just do the opposite, and it has worked out quite well.

One of my favorite parts of my job as a U.S. Senator now, after having been the Florida attorney general and having worked with law enforcement for many, many years, is to spotlight Florida's brave law enforcement heroes when they do something uniquely heroic. It shows why a free society operating under the rule of law has to have brave men and women to answer a call and stand on a line to bravely serve us. Today, it is an honor to recognize Lee County Sheriff's Office Deputy Raymond Tellez Ferriol with the Florida's Finest Award.

Earlier this year, Deputy Tellez Ferriol saved the lives of three young girls.

Many people know Florida is a peninsula. We are surrounded by the ocean. On this particular day, there was a rip current that was very close to shore. If you have lived in Florida for any time or even if you have traveled to Florida, you know that rip currents can be incredibly deadly, pulling even expert swimmers out to sea very quickly.

On this day, it was supposed to be a time of fun in the Sun, but it almost turned deadly when three young girls got caught in a very strong rip current and were struggling to stay above water and get back to shore.

Deputy Tellez Ferriol was on patrol in full uniform, just going about his day protecting Floridians. He heard bystanders screaming for help. He immediately ran over, and without hesitation, he went into the water to rescue these three young girls. He grabbed flotation devices and started swimming. Thankfully, he was able to get them back to shore safely, as in this area, the strong rip current was really pushing all of them out. It was because of his bravery and his quick thinking that these girls are still alive.

While this instance had a happy ending, it is worth reminding Floridians and everyone heading to Florida—and we know there are many moving to Florida. It doesn't matter where I go in the Nation; someone I talked to just

had a family member move to my home State and is one of my new constituents. But it is always important to remind everyone who lives in Florida or who visits our State's beaches of the hidden dangers of rip currents. There have already been eight confirmed deaths due to rip currents since the start of this year in Florida. So we always advise folks to swim with a partner, to consider swimming when there is a lifeguard on duty, and to identify and know what each beach warning flag means.

But today is about recognizing Deputy Tellez Ferriol. He was there that day because he was serving his community as a guardian, as someone who signed up to put his safety behind the safety of others.

I, for one, am incredibly honored and incredibly thankful that there are people like Deputy Tellez Ferriol and others who answer the call so bravely to serve others as their profession. Law enforcement officers do so much every day to keep us safe, and it is always such a joy to highlight those who show exceptional bravery and save lives.

Today, I recognize one of Florida's finest, Lee County Sheriff's Office Deputy Raymond Tellez Ferriol.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mrs. MOODY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

USMMA ATHLETICS ACT OF 2026

Mrs. MOODY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 434, S. 3266.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3266) to support the athletic programs of the United States Merchant Marine Academy.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in italic, as follows:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "USMMA Athletics Act of 2026".

SEC. 2. SUPPORT FOR ATHLETIC PROGRAMS OF THE UNITED STATES MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 513 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"§51329. Support for athletic programs of the United States Merchant Marine Academy

"(a) CORPORATION FOR SUPPORT AUTHORIZED.—

"(1) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of Transportation may establish, in accordance with the laws of the State of New York, a corporation (in this section referred to as the 'corporation') to support the athletic programs of the United States Merchant Marine Academy.

"(2) OWNERSHIP.—All stock of the corporation shall be owned by the United States and held in the name of, and subject to be voted by, the Secretary.

"(3) PURPOSE.—The corporation shall operate exclusively for charitable, educational, and civic purposes to support the athletic programs of the United States Merchant Marine Academy.

"(b) CORPORATE ORGANIZATION.—The corporation shall be organized and operated—

"(1) as a nonprofit corporation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;

"(2) in accordance with this section; and

"(3) pursuant to the laws of the State of New York, its articles of incorporation, and its by-laws.

"(c) CORPORATE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.—

"(1) LIMITATION ON COMPENSATION.—The members of the board of directors of the corporation shall serve without compensation as members of the board, except for reasonable travel and other related expenses for attendance at meetings of the board.

"(2) DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION EMPLOYEE MEMBERSHIP.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may authorize employees of the Department of Transportation to serve, in their official capacities, as members of the board of directors of the corporation—

"(i) for the sole purpose of providing oversight and advice to, and in coordination with, the corporation; and

"(ii) who may not participate in the day-to-day operations of the corporation.

"(B) LIMITATION.—Employees serving as a member of the board of directors pursuant to an authorization under subparagraph (A) may not hold more than one-third of the directorships.

"(C) APPLICABILITY OF LIMITATION ON COMPENSATION.—An employee serving as a member of the board of directors shall be subject to the limitation on compensation under paragraph (1).

"(D) PUBLICATION IN FEDERAL REGISTER.—The Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register an authorization under subparagraph (A) of an employee of the Department of Transportation to participate as a member of the board of directors.

"(d) CONTRACTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may enter the corporation into contracts and cooperative agreements for the purpose of supporting the athletic programs of the United States Merchant Marine Academy.

"(2) SOLE-SOURCE CONTRACTS.—Notwithstanding section 3105 of title 41, United States Code, a contract or cooperative agreement entered into under paragraph (1) may be a sole-source contract, subject to section 3304(a) of such title.

"(3) ACQUISITIONS.—Notwithstanding chapter 63 of title 31, United States Code, a cooperative agreement under this section may be used to acquire property, services, or travel for the direct benefit or use of the United States Merchant Marine Academy.

"(e) LEASES.—For the purpose of supporting the athletic programs of the United States Merchant Marine Academy, in consultation with the Administrator of General Services, the Secretary may rent or lease to the corporation any real property located at the United States Merchant Marine Academy—

"(1) under such terms and conditions as are deemed advisable;