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No. 45

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Thursday, March 12, 2026, at 9:30 a.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2026

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, Sovereign of our Nation, by whose will the world and all creation have their being, we magnify Your Name. We know that You are mighty and we are weak, but we take heart in the knowledge that we can rely on Your strength.

Inspire our Senators today to know the constancy of Your presence, to be aware of the certainty of Your judgment, and to lift their hearts in frequent prayer to You. May they worship as they work. Lord, guide them by Your highest wisdom, and fill them with Your peace.

And, Lord, we continue to request that the power of Your providence prevails in the Iranian war.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MULLIN). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

HOUSING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ACT—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 6644, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 6644) to increase the supply of housing in America, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Scott (SC)/Warren amendment No. 4308, in the nature of a substitute.

Thune (for Scott (SC)/Warren) amendment No. 4307 (to amendment No. 4308), to require the Comptroller General of the United States to submit to Congress studies on workforce housing, housing for persons who are elderly or disabled, proximity of housing to Superfund sites, and residential heirs property.

Thune amendment No. 4310 (to amendment No. 4307), to change the enactment date.

Thune amendment No. 4311 (to the text proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 4308), to change the enactment date.

Thune amendment No. 4312 (to amendment No. 4311), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF NATIONAL TRIO DAY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I want to recognize the 40th anniversary of a day we call National TRIO Day.

On February 24, 1986, a congressional resolution declared that February 28

should be designated “National TRIO Day.” At the same time, I come here to recognize the achievements of the TRIO programs.

Although there are now six distinct TRIO programs, the name TRIO originates from the Higher Education Act of 1968. That Act consolidated a “trio” of programs under one overall program. Today, these six programs include Upward Bound, Student Support Services, Talent Search, Educational Opportunity Centers, the Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program, and sixth, the Staff Development Training Program.

I am a longtime supporter of TRIO programs, and I am a member of the TRIO caucus in the U.S. Senate. As a caucus member, I understand these programs provide critical support to low-income, first-generation college students and prospective students. In 2025, 54 TRIO programs in Iowa served over 18,000 Iowans from sixth grade to graduate programs.

As we mark 40 years of National TRIO Day, I commend the educators; I commend the counselors; and I commend the staff—all who have dedicated their careers to students’ success. At the same time, I celebrate the generations of students whose lives have been transformed through TRIO.

I remain committed to supporting these vital programs so they may continue expanding opportunities and building stronger futures for Iowa and for the Nation.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, we are almost now a month into the Democrat's DHS, Department of Homeland Security, shutdown. Democrats have essentially walked away from trying to solve it. That is right. After almost a month of forcing DHS employees to work without pay, Democrats have shown their true colors. They don't care about funding Homeland Security. They don't actually care about reforming immigration enforcement; that has also become very obvious. They are only interested in keeping this issue alive for an election that is 8 months away.

This is the type of political game that the American people are sick of. I am sick of it.

I want to read for you something that was reported here by Bloomberg. This is a Member of the Democrat leadership. The quote is this:

We are very serene with what is going on. We are very serene with what is going on.

We have a job to do. Part of that job is funding the Federal Government. That hadn't always been treated like a priority around here, but this year we made some real bipartisan progress in government funding. We made progress despite the fact that Democrats delayed things with a record-long 43-day government shutdown last fall. And we were on track, this year, to complete all 12 appropriations bills by the end of January, finishing the work for fiscal year 2026 and laying the groundwork to continue our progress in fiscal year 2027.

Among those bills was a bipartisan agreement for a full-year Department of Homeland Security funding bill, with reforms requested by the Democrats. It had money for more body cameras, deescalation training, and additional oversight of immigration enforcement activities.

But then Democrats reneged on that agreement. So we went back to the negotiating table—or, I should say, when I say “we,” I mean we the Republicans, at least, went back to the negotiating table.

Since Democrats reneged on the DHS agreement, the White House has made two very serious offers for legislating additional reforms. The same cannot be said of the Democrats. And with their refusal to respond to the White House's second—and, again, serious and substantial offer—Democrats have now essentially walked away from negotiations entirely.

We have made repeated overtures to them to get them back to the negotiating table, but they are not interested in talking.

It might be understandable to walk away from a negotiation when there doesn't seem to be a prospect of coming to a resolution, but that isn't the case here. As I said, the Republicans and the White House have demonstrated their willingness to negotiate and compromise. It is Democrats who are refusing to talk.

So why would Democrats walk away from what could otherwise be a very productive negotiation? Not long ago, Democrats were telling us how urgent the need for reform was. Now they are apparently fine without reforms.

Now, why would that be?

Well, it could be that Democrats believe the actions the Trump administration has already taken on its own are enough to resolve the issues, or it could be that Democrats were never really interested in implementing reforms in the first place.

Actually, if Democrats cared about reforms, they would be coming to the table to get a bill. Instead, they are playing politics.

There was a time when Democrats—I remember very well—would lecture about the importance of funding the government and the dangers of government shutdowns. Well, those days are apparently long gone. Democrats now see government shutdowns as a handy tool to use any time they don't get everything that they want.

They don't care if they force people to work without pay indefinitely. They don't care if they put our national security and public safety in jeopardy. They only care about what is in it for them.

As I said, the American people are tired of the games. Lines get longer at the airports because TSA isn't funded. The American people want us to do our jobs.

Republicans are at the table. We are ready to work toward a solution. Democrats have walked away, and they will need to explain to the American people why they refuse to do their job and why they regard doing nothing as better than doing something.

And maybe, again, it is because, in the words of one of the Democrat leaders, “We are very serene with what is going on.”

We are very serene with what is going on.

That captured it.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

IRAN

Mr. SCHUMER. Well, while Americans are still in the dark for why we are at war, each passing day gives us a cleaner picture of the cost of war.

Yesterday, we learned about 140 American servicemembers have been wounded since hostilities—8 of them seriously injured. Eight servicemembers have been killed in the line of duty, and my prayers are with all of those who have died and have been harmed and who are still, of course, in harm's way.

Thousands of people in the Middle East have been killed, including 170 in an all-girls elementary school that initial reports suggested may have been the result of U.S. operations. We need a full, transparent, and independent investigation to get to the bottom of what happened at this elementary school and why so many civilians were killed.

The economic costs are also mounting. This morning, we learned that even before the war, inflation had stayed elevated, which means that Americans are continuing to pay more for groceries and rent and electricity.

People want costs to go down, not to stay where they are, and that is what we Democrats are fighting for—to lower their costs. And the numbers came out before Donald Trump started a war in the Middle East, which will drive prices even higher. It is almost certain that the inflation number will go up next month, and that is just what Americans don't want.

A gallon of gas today is \$3.58, on average—60 cents more than it was a month ago—60 cents—more than halfway to a dollar. And it is going to get worse.

Iran's greatest leverage right now is the Strait of Hormuz, and the new extremist Supreme Leader is not going to give up that leverage very easily. At least three ships were attacked over the last day in the Strait of Hormuz, bringing the total to 13.

This conflict continues to expand, not shrink, and the danger of a shortage of oil and prices going up further is getting greater, not lesser. Through all this change, all this chaos—higher gas prices, rising casualties, increased hostilities—Americans are asking a very simple question: Why? Why is America at war? Americans certainly don't want war. Americans didn't ask for this. The answer is: There is no good reason America is at war.

Donald Trump and his administration keep changing the story and the rationale every day. First, it was regime change; then it was about Iran's nuclear program; then it was to get rid of Iran's Navy; then it was regime change again; then they say it is defensive. Depending on whom you ask, we are either near the end of the war or we are just getting started. And if you ask Donald Trump if we are at the end of the war or the beginning, he says it is both.

This insanity must stop. The Senate must have public hearings with Cabinet officials. The American public has to hear these Cabinet officials questioned by Members of the Senate—Democrat and Republican—as to what the heck is going on.

Secretary Rubio, Secretary Hegseth, and other senior officials must come to the Senate for public hearings and testify under oath as to why our troops are fighting and dying in the Middle East. The American people deserve answers. Senate Republicans must listen to the outrage of the public and hold public hearings with Cabinet officials at once.

Americans don't want war—not Republican voters, not Independent voters, not even many of Donald Trump's MAGA base. They feel betrayed by what has happened in the Middle East, and they feel betrayed by the Senators in this Chamber who refuse to stand up for the Constitution and refuse to put a check on Donald Trump's belligerence—belligerence that doesn't seem to have much of a rhyme or reason from day to day.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

On DHS, Republicans, for weeks, have refused to address some of the most egregious abuses from ICE that we have seen and that have plagued cities like Minneapolis and so many other cities around the country. Democrats have offered multiple rounds of proposals, and we are serious—very serious—about getting something done. But Republicans need to show that they are serious also, and we have a lot of work left to do.

Democrats want to be reasonable. Later today, Senator MURRAY will come to the floor and offer legislation to fund everything at DHS except for ICE and Border Patrol. We can take care of TSA. We can take care of the Coast Guard, CISA, and FEMA today. We are ready to make sure these workers are paid. All the Republicans have to do is go along with our unanimous consent request, not block it.

This is the second time Senator MURRAY will bring this bill to the floor because last week she tried to do this and who objected? Republicans. Republicans say they want to stand up for TSA; then they block TSA funding. They said they are worried about FEMA and the Coast Guard; then they blocked funding for FEMA and the Coast Guard. How worried can they be?

If Republicans are going to play political games and block funding for the Agencies they claim to care about, they should spare everyone the crocodile tears. Even better, when Senator MURRAY brings her bill to the floor to fund TSA, the Coast Guard, FEMA, CISA, and all the other programs, Republicans should not get in the way.

SAVE AMERICA ACT

On the SAVE Act, Donald Trump has given Republicans in Congress a ridiculous ultimatum: Help him thoroughly undermine our democracy or he will bring all legislation to a screeching halt. What kind of President is this? It sounds like a pouting second grader.

Even though it is clear that the SAVE Act has little chance of becoming law, Donald Trump is still hell-bent on getting Republicans to ram this bill through the Chamber because he

thinks undermining the vote is the only prayer Republicans have in the midterms. Isn't that pathetic? Republicans think they are doing so bad that they must undermine democracy and prevent tens of millions of Americans from voting.

Donald Trump has said it himself. He said, if Republicans can pass the SAVE Act, "it'll guarantee the midterms."

Let me read that again. Donald Trump says, if Republicans pass the SAVE Act, "it'll guarantee the midterms."

This is outrageous. Undermine democracy, prevent people from voting in a democracy, and that is the only way you can win? That is not democracy, Donald Trump; that is autocracy. Letting you or DOGE or Musk pick who is taken off the rolls and not even notifying them when they show up to vote—they say: You are no longer on the rolls, you are purged—that is not democracy. But Donald Trump doesn't believe in democracy. He sees he is losing the election because he is not dealing with the issues Democrats are pounding away on: costs, corruption, chaos. So he says: Let's undermine democracy. Let's kick millions off the voter rolls, millions that we choose. It is outrageous.

The SAVE Act is nothing more than Jim Crow. It could disenfranchise millions of American citizens—American citizens. We are not talking about immigrants; we are talking about American citizens that are going to be kicked off the rolls—lots of them. It will make it far harder for people to register to vote, it will take away vote-by-mail, it will eliminate online registration—all of these tried and true and safe ways to participate in democracy, but Trump wants to take them away. We know what is going on.

Donald Trump knows that November is starting to look disastrous for him, and Republicans are seeing the same thing. So the only shot of winning in Trump's mind is to cheat. The only shot of winning this election for Donald Trump is to cheat, is to undermine democracy. This is ghastly. It is one of the worst things we have seen in America in a very long time. But Donald Trump has made it clear. He is telling Republican Senators, he is telling Republican House Members: Either help me undermine democracy or I will take Congress and all legislation hostage.

NOMINATION OF JEREMY CARL

Mr. President, finally, on Jeremy Carl, yesterday, Jeremy Carl—Donald Trump's nominee to serve as Assistant Secretary of State for International Organizations—thank God, withdrew his nomination. All I have to say is good riddance to White supremacists and rightwing bigots. Jeremy Carl has a long history of saying violent, anti-Semitic, and openly racist, and I am glad that his comments were exposed and rejected.

It is troubling that we keep seeing a pattern where Donald Trump is very much at ease nominating people with

openly White supremacist and anti-Semitic views. Jeremy Carl, Paul Ingrassia, and Darren Beattie are three of the clearest examples of Trump being perfectly at ease appointing individuals with White supremacy and anti-Semitism. Both sides—both sides, Democrats and Republicans—must reject people like these and call out anti-Semitism no matter from where it arises.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). The minority whip.

ASIAN CARP

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, 23 years ago—that is quite a few years—I heard about a threat to the future of the Great Lakes. The threat turned out to be a fish. Yes, a fish. This fish was imported from somewhere in Asia—we believe China—by some people in the United States who believed that it could be raised in confinement ponds and sold for a profit. Whether that was ever a possibility, I don't know, but the problem is that the area where they chose to have the confinement ponds was flooded. And when it was flooded, this new invasive species, this new fish, found its way into the Mississippi River and started propagating.

It was a voracious fish. It didn't leave much room or food for other fish in the area. It made its way into the Mississippi River and, heading north, hit the Illinois River and headed for Lake Michigan, the Great Lakes. It was then that they sounded an alarm and said if this fish ever becomes commonplace in the Great Lakes, it will destroy it as a fishery and change it forever.

So I decided 23 years ago to call on the experts and ask them: What can we do to stop it? They weren't sure. They hadn't faced a challenge like this in the past. But they made some suggestions. As a layman and a person who is not a professional in the area in any way whatsoever, I was dedicated to doing what I could to save the Great Lakes, but I wasn't sure what that would be. They suggested we try a number of things.

Over the years, we invested millions of dollars into the Illinois River to stop it as a conduit for this fish into Lake Michigan and the Great Lakes. Some of the suggestions were almost comic: the suggestion of an electric barrier to shock the fish and hold them back, a bubble machine that sounded like some disco program to me. All of the suggestions went on and on. The good news is we tried a lot of things—a lot of things—over the years, and we have been successful so far in keeping the Asian carp out of the Great Lakes. There are people who were skeptical from the beginning that we could achieve that, but we did.

Well, yesterday, there was a development in this plight of trying to restrain this fish from making it into the Great Lakes. It could be a positive one. You see, the President of the United States met with Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer yesterday, and President

Trump posted on Truth Social that he was now joining forces with us to stop this invasive species.

In the post, the President noted that the carp were already in the Great Lakes.

We don't believe that is true, but they are a threat to the Great Lakes every day, every week, every year.

But there is a problem. The measures that we are taking—the significant measures—to protect the Great Lakes depend on an infrastructure investment known as Brandon Road. Brandon Road is a stretch of the Des Plaines River in Illinois, in the northern part of Illinois, which needs to have an accommodation made to make sure that the ships that are moving back and forth between the river and the Great Lakes aren't allowing fish into the Great Lakes area.

It is a massive investment. The problem we have is the Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for building this facility in the Great Lakes, and, at the end of last year, the Trump administration delayed the Brandon Road Interbasin Project for so-called further review.

The funding that was in place and ready to be spent to protect the Great Lakes has been on hold. On January 15 of this year, I wrote a letter with Senator DUCKWORTH, my colleague from Illinois, and the Michigan Senators asking the Trump administration to lift this review and pause so that we can get going forward with this project.

We still have not received a response to that letter.

I called the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Adam Telle, who reiterated the administration's support and the importance of the Brandon Road project. However, he didn't give any indication of when the current pause will end.

So here is the state of play: We have a new means—an effective means—to stop these fish from invading the Great Lakes. We need the approval of President Trump for that to happen. Yesterday, he promised that he would be part of the solution.

Today, I am asking him to really step forward: Make the call today, not tomorrow. Make a call today to the Army Corps of Engineers to tell them you are lifting this Trump administration pause on the development of Brandon Road.

I believe this is a serious threat to the future of the Great Lakes. I am happy to have the President on board, but we need him to do so immediately to help us move forward.

AFFORDABILITY

Mr. President, on a separate topic, last week, I met with leaders from Bloomington-Normal, IL, to discuss infrastructure. One part of that conversation I won't forget. They showed me bottles of liquid. It looked like tomato juice or lemonade. It was a strange looking concoction.

It turns out it was well water found in the pipes of more than 80 homes in

a community called Colonial Meadows, an unincorporated area of McLean County, IL. It is often referred to as a county island.

I thought instantly of Flint, MI. You remember that story; we all do. Decisions were made by local governments which exposed a lot of people to unsafe drinking water, primarily minority populations. Years after that happened, there were still health consequences.

We wouldn't want anyone to drink water that was coming from Flint, MI, until it was cleaned up, and we certainly don't want that to happen when it comes to Colonial Meadows. For nearly 180 people living in my State, when they turn on their faucets, they see Flint, Michigan-type water.

As I heard about these families—many of them low income or senior citizens—I thought to myself: How can this happen after Flint, MI, and in this year? How can we be at a point where we can't provide clean water to Americans in the year 2026?

The answer, of course, is money. It is costly to extend water lines to new areas, and because it costs more than these families can afford, they have to worry about their children bathing, brushing their teeth, or cooking with this type of water.

That is what we are talking about when we say the word "affordability"—that all Americans should be able to access the basic goods they need: food, water, power, housing, and healthcare. That should be part of the American dream that is a reality.

Our job as elected officials is to give Americans a helping hand to afford these necessities. Sadly, the administration has not learned that lesson.

On President Trump's watch, prices are up, and Americans are feeling the pain of his misguided policies. More than half of all Americans say President Trump has made the economy worse in the second term.

In February, the economy lost 92,000 jobs, and Americans are losing faith that the President cares enough to change that.

Through chaotic tariffs, mass firings of Federal employees, and cuts to Federal energy grants, the President has left the economy in a weaker state than when he first came to office.

On Monday, the price of oil rose to its highest point in years because of President Trump's invasion of Iran. Americans are already feeling the impact.

It was October 11, 2002, in this Senate Chamber, near the hour of midnight, that a vote was cast to determine whether or not American forces would invade Iraq. I remember it well. I voted no. It was 23 Senators out of 100 who voted no—1 Republican, 22 Democrats.

In fairness to President George W. Bush, he understood the meaning of the Constitution when it says Congress should declare war. We had a fulsome debate about whether or not we should invade Iraq.

The administration, through Secretary Powell and Vice President Che-

ney, presented their side of the case. It was pretty clear they believed there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq that threatened the region, our allies and friends, and even the United States itself. They believed that Saddam Hussein was not trustworthy and invaded Kuwait, and they believed that we needed to do something about it.

They made their case, we debated it at length, and a vote was taken. Approval was given to President Bush to move forward on the invasion of Iraq.

As I said earlier, I voted no. I had questions in my own mind as to whether or not we could prove there were actually weapons of mass destruction.

What happened next? American forces rolled over Saddam Hussein and then returned Kuwait to its independent status. But in the process, they started searching for those weapons of mass destruction.

There were no weapons of mass destruction. Our vast intelligence agencies and network were just plain wrong. As a consequence, we found ourselves in a place in the Middle East with an American force of troops on the ground and all the intended complimentary forces in a mission that was hard to explain to anyone.

It took us years before we could finally extricate ourselves from Iraq and Afghanistan nearby. In the process, 4,500 American lives were lost, brave men and women in our military who served our country as required and did it with honor. It was an expensive lesson for America and one I hope we have learned today.

Our invasion of Iran is quite different. It was done by this President without consultation from Congress. There was a last-minute notification that it was going to happen in a matter of hours. That was it.

The American people didn't get to hear the debate as to why it was necessary to invade Iran. The war just launched itself, I guess, with the President's approval.

The net result of that, of course, is we have so many different explanations from the Trump administration as to why we have invaded Iran. By my count, there are at least six or seven different explanations in a matter of few days that we have been in that country.

The average American can't possibly understand which is the one real reason. It is hard for me to understand with the classified briefings we have been given.

The fact of the matter is that war is underway. We feel it, and we see it at the gas pumps of America.

Yesterday, the average price at a gasoline pump in America was \$3.50 a gallon, 60 cents higher than when the President gave the State of the Union Address, a few weeks ago.

It is even worse for diesel. We saw prices skyrocket by more than \$1 a gallon this month. That means higher costs for farmers who grow feed and higher costs for shipping.

In less than 2 weeks, the President's war wiped out a year of stable fuel prices, without any clear or coherent endgame. In fact, just yesterday, the President lifted—lifted—sanctions on Russian oil in an ill-conceived attempt to lower gas prices.

His sanctions relief will fund Putin's war in Ukraine while, at the same time, Russia reportedly shares intelligence with Iran on the placement of U.S. forces.

This dizzying mess in the Middle East comes on the heels of one of the largest increases in utility rates American families have ever lived through. Last year in America, electric and gas utility companies requested to raise their rates by nearly \$31 billion—\$31 billion. That is more than double the increase in 2024.

Utility bills are going up. Next are your groceries. American people complain they are the toughest bills to pay each month.

What caused this large increase? The policies of the Trump administration. The Trump administration cut \$8 billion in low-cost clean energy and grid enhancement grants.

Think about that. We had appropriated the money. We had it ready for distribution to lower the costs of energy into the grid in America and to reduce the utility bills, and the President stopped it. Why? Because one of his closest friends and supporters, a man named Harold Hamm, announced that he would give the President \$1 billion for his campaign if the President would stop the regulation of oil and gas.

The President agreed to do that. As a consequence, American families are paying higher utility bills than ever because of Mr. Hamm.

If you ask the President his response, "Drill, baby, drill." That is his response to everything. It may sound bold and courageous, but it is feckless and counterproductive when it comes to the American families' annual budgets.

These grants that were eliminated by the Trump administration would provide more affordable energy on the grid for families and lower utility rates. The President stopped it. Without them, utility companies will make consumers pay for grid upgrades in the form of higher energy bills.

While this administration is making it harder to generate electricity, they are also allowing AI data centers to proliferate with no consideration of their impact on energy demand.

It is interesting. Public sentiment questions these data centers, under the current circumstance, until you add one factor: If you require them to have clean energy sources which they have developed for the electricity they need, public approval of the data center moves forward.

By the year 2030, the electricity for data centers is expected to increase by 350 percent—350 percent. One estimate predicts we will need 100 gigawatts of

new power generation to accommodate this growth. That is enough electricity to power one-fourth of American homes—75 million homes—electricity for data centers.

If there is a clean source, let's talk about it. But if it is going on the utility bills of American families, it is a legitimate question as to whether or not this is a wise investment.

The President is weakening our electricity supply when demand is spiking. The recipe would make American families pay more for their energy.

Americans will not find any relief at the supermarket either. The prices of groceries are at record highs. The cost of a pound of ground beef is up more than 20 percent from last year. Orange juice is up 28 percent. Coffee is up 33 percent. I have seen that in the grocery store myself. Prices on baby food items have increased by an average of 24 percent.

It is the No. 1 complaint from American families when it comes to affordability.

The President promised Republicans would be the party of working families, but instead American parents have seen the cost of raising a family increase under this administration.

These higher costs are explained by President Trump's tariffs, which made it harder for businesses in America to import food we cannot grow at home. And despite the Supreme Court striking down Trump's tariffs as illegal, this administration is doubling down on this tariff trade tax.

So the next time you shop at a grocery store and see prices even higher than what you saw last week, remember President Trump said, "Affordability is a hoax"—the President of the United States.

This administration is becoming increasingly detached from the reality that American families face every day. Illinois families are telling me they are afraid—afraid they may not be able to pay for their groceries, their power bills, their rent. For residents like those in unincorporated McClean County, IL, some cannot even afford clean water.

We must give them relief, and that requires ending the President's disastrous economic policies. The American people will have the last word when the election is held.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, for 26 days now, Democrats have left our country undefended. Democrats in this Chamber have voted three times to keep the Department of Homeland Security shut down.

Once again, Democrats are putting illegal immigrant criminals ahead of the safety and security of the American people. Quoted in the press this morning was Senator BRIAN SCHATZ, Democrat from Hawaii, who says he has the votes wrapped up to be the next whip

for the Democrat Party. But this is what he said about what the Democrats are doing now—keeping the Department of Homeland Security shut down. He said:

We are very serene with what is going on.

"[V]ery serene."

Well, let me tell you what that means for our country, what the Democrats are very serene about. Right now, at this very moment, Iran is targeting our homeland. They have announced it. They are in the process of—let me quote a headline that appeared yesterday in the Los Angeles Times newspaper.

It says "Iran's threats on U.S. soil." Threats to the American people right here at home. It says "sleeper cells, lone wolves, cyberattacks."

Our government's own threat assessment calls Iran a "major threat" to our cyber network and our data. It is the Department of Homeland Security that is responsible for defending us from these attacks—the very Department that Democrats in this body, that side of the hall, refuse to fund.

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency is a vital part and plays a critical role in the Department of Homeland Security. It is the Agency that protects our critical infrastructure nationwide, including our Nation's energy infrastructure.

Mr. President, 2,400 people provide this vital service to protect our country each and every day, but because of the Democrat shutdown, only 1 out of every 3 of them are on the job today, and those who are, are working without pay. All of the others have been furloughed because of the Democrat shutdown. These are people who are critical to our intelligence analysis. These are people who are cyber security specialists. They are all off the job.

The Democrats say: Stay home. We don't care. We prefer illegal immigrants than the safety and security of our Nation. Stay home. We don't care.

And they say: We are very serene about it.

Can you imagine that? The security assessments, the vulnerability scans, the protective guidance for our networks—they have been canceled or delayed because of the Democrats' actions. Our energy grids, our hospitals, our State and local governments—they are all left exposed. Democrats are serene about that this morning. That is what they say.

This is all happening because the Democrats are driven by the far-left ideology of their most radical supporters, and that is why they have shut down the Department of Homeland Security.

At major airports across the country, TSA security lines are taking hours for people to get through. Fifty thousand TSA agents are missing their paychecks, and many of them live paycheck to paycheck. For the third time in just 6 months, Democrats are forcing TSA agents to work without pay.

CBS News reported last night on what that means. It means unscheduled absences have doubled in the shutdown. Hundreds of qualified, experienced agents have quit.

This is what happens when Democrats force people to work without pay. Some go and get other jobs, take part-time jobs, don't show up for work. Well, how do the American people respond? Well, services clubs are holding food drives for the unpaid agents. Our Rotary Club in Casper, WY, has done the exact same thing to help these agents because the Democrats want to keep the Department of Homeland Security shut down.

Think about that—a food drive for Federal workers who are going to work every single day who can't get paid. And what do the Democrats have to say about it? "We are very serene with what is going on." That is how the Democrats look at it today, sitting back in their serenity, watching as people suffer, people work without getting paid, and our Nation's security at risk today. Democrats don't seem to care. Once again, they are much more interested in protecting illegal immigrant criminals than they are in protecting the well-being and the safety and security of the American people.

As Democrats keep the Department of Homeland Security shut down, the threats continue to grow, and our vulnerability continues to be exposed.

This past weekend, in Senator SCHUMER's—the minority leader—hometown of New York City, two radical Islamic terrorists threw homemade bombs into a crowd—New York City—in front of the mayor's residence. The attempted bombing was carried out by two individuals who identify closely with the terrorist group ISIS.

Recall that "ISIS" stands for the "Islamic State."

The New York City Police Department reported that the explosive devices could have caused serious injury, could have caused death, and we are fortunate that no one died.

A week earlier, as the world knows, in Austin, TX, another radical Islamist terrorist opened fire into a crowded restaurant. Three people were murdered, and a dozen more were wounded. The shooter wore a T-shirt. What did it say? It had an Iranian flag on it. It was underneath a sweatshirt that said "Property of Allah."

These are the threats we face right here on American soil today. It is reckless for the Democrats to shut down the Department designed to stop terrorists, and it is insulting to the American people to say that they are serene about it.

Defunding American security is disruptive, it is dangerous, and it is deadly.

Let me tell you about one more person. Her name is Stephanie Minter. She was a mother, 41 years old, from Fredericksburg, VA. Two weeks ago, Stephanie was waiting at a bus stop not an hour away from where we stand right

here in the U.S. Capitol. She was stabbed to death by an illegal immigrant criminal—stabbed to death.

Do you know when her killer entered the country illegally? In 2012. Barack Obama was President at the time. Do you know how many times that killer has been arrested here in the United States in those 14 years he has been here illegally? Thirty times. Arrested thirty times and arrested for violent crimes—multiple stabbings, assaults, for rape. Do you know how many times he was convicted? Zero. Why? Because pro-crime Democrats—Democrats who prefer illegal immigrant criminals over American law-abiding citizens—pro-crime Democrats kept dropping charges time after time after time because the pro-crime Democrats were worried about something—in their words, they were worried about "immigration consequences."

"[I]mmigration consequences"? What about the effect on the victims of these crimes? And now this death in Northern Virginia, right across the river. It is happening right across the river in Fairfax County, VA. Who supports this? Well, apparently the Democrats do, sanctuary State Democrats. Democrats like their newly-elected Governor of Virginia because on her very first day in office—and, of course, she ran as a moderate—on her very first day in office, she announced that Virginia would no longer cooperate with Federal immigration enforcement.

You know they used to say: There is a new sheriff in town. This isn't a sheriff; this is somebody that wants to undermine the law of our Nation, undermine the security of the American people.

Get this: She said that enforcing Federal immigration law "is certainly not contributing to any strengthening of our community—let alone making our communities safer."

This is blood on their hands. This is blood on the hands of the Democrats.

Governor Spanberger is wrong. Enforcing Federal immigration laws saves American lives. Failing to enforce them endangers every American.

The police force—the police are beside themselves. The county police from Fairfax County repeatedly warned the liberal prosecutors to lock up this killer who killed Stephanie. But what happened? The local police commander wrote: "It is not a question of if" this man will hurt someone "but rather when." And now it happened with a murder. Three months after that message was sent, Stephanie Minter was murdered by an illegal immigrant in cold blood.

We owe every American citizen a government that keeps them safe and secure.

The Democrats have a whole different view of America today. It is not a view of laws, citizenship; it is a view of open borders and illegal immigrant criminals.

Republicans want a nation where mothers can go to work, where college

kids can go out on runs, where women can ride on the train without fear of losing their lives to illegal immigrant criminals being protected by the Democrats.

Democrats are fighting for something so different than what Republicans believe the American Nation stands for and our history stands for. They want open borders. They want to release illegal immigrant criminals into our communities. They want to turn America into a sanctuary country. That is why they defunded the Department of Homeland Security.

Make no mistake, if Democrats continue to obstruct funding for the Department of Homeland Security, more blood will be on their hands.

The next terrorist plot that goes undetected, Democrats, blood will be on your hands.

The next lone wolf attack, Democrats, blood will be on your hands.

The next criminal who crosses our border illegally and kills an innocent American, Democrats, blood will be on your hands.

The American people deserve safety and security. It is time to reopen the Department of Homeland Security. It is time to pay the people who protect our country. Let them get back to work protecting us. It is time to put the American people first, not illegal immigrant criminals, as the Democrats continue to want to do.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

ENERGY

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to discuss a pivotal time for American energy security in light of the Iranian regime's continued actions to undermine the stability of global energy markets.

Over the past two decades, our Nation has transformed itself from a position of energy dependence to one of energy dominance.

In the early 2000s, our country produced roughly 5 million barrels of oil per day. Last October, U.S. producers delivered a record 13.86 million barrels daily, so almost 14 million barrels a day. We have gone from 5 million to almost 14 million barrels a day in domestic oil production. This tremendous increase was driven by the shale revolution, which reshaped global energy markets and strengthened our national security.

Americans consume about 13.8 million barrels of transportation fuels per day—so roughly 14 million barrels per day—which includes 9 million barrels of gasoline, illustrating how critical domestic production is to meeting the demand and how far we have come.

Innovation and American entrepreneurship in places like my home State of North Dakota and the Bakken formation have made that possible. Through advancements in horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing, American producers cracked the code and unlocked oil reserves once thought

to be out of reach. As a result, we are able to better leverage our Nation's abundant oil and gas reserves—a vitally strategic asset in the face of instability in the Middle East and other parts of the globe.

To maintain our energy leadership, we must not only focus on sustaining production but also growing it and continuing to grow domestic energy production here at home. This means continuing to innovate and improve the amount of oil we can recover from the wells that we have already drilled. It is just common sense. Today, we only recover about 10 percent of the oil from unconventional shale formations like the Bakken in my home State—only 10 percent of the oil that is there and available.

That is why we are embarking on the next phase of the shale revolution, which we are calling Crack the Code 2.0. We are bringing together energy leaders and State and Federal partners, including the Department of Energy, to develop and employ enhanced oil recovery techniques using CO₂ on a commercially viable basis. We are focusing on linking oil producers with our baseload coal-fired powerplants that provide a reliable source of CO₂ for enhanced oil recovery—EOR, enhanced oil recovery. Doing so presents the opportunity to unlock 5 billion—5 billion—additional barrels of oil just out of the Bakken, just out of North Dakota, and billions more from other shale formations from Texas to Pennsylvania.

Sustaining and growing U.S. production means strengthening our ability to supply energy both domestically and abroad. As long as oil remains a globally traded commodity, stability matters, especially in times of geopolitical uncertainty. Iran is taking deliberate action to disrupt global energy flows by attacking energy infrastructure in the region and threatening oil shipping through the Strait of Hormuz. Thankfully, the United States is in a much stronger position today because we have more than doubled our domestic production. As I said, we have gone from 5 to 14 million barrels a day. Our energy producers have become a stabilizing force in the global marketplace, limiting the ability of hostile regimes to weaponize access to energy, but we still need to produce more here at home, both now and for the long run.

The first phase of the shale revolution unlocked tremendous energy resources in our Nation. The next phase must focus on maximizing the responsible recovery of our vast energy reserves and extending the life of these oilfields to sustain and grow production. That is exactly what Crack the Code 2.0 is all about.

It is no surprise that we have seen oil prices rise and fall rapidly during the conflict with Iran. The Strait of Hormuz carries more than 20 percent of the world's liquid petroleum products, and 90 percent of the world's reserve surge production capacity is up-channel from the Strait. Despite Iranian

threats, there are things that can be done to secure the Strait of Hormuz and reduce energy price volatility.

First, as the President has said repeatedly, Operation Epic Fury will be limited to weeks, not months, so we should expect oil price spikes to be short-lived.

Second, we continue to strike Iran's ability to project power, including Iran's ability to threaten ship traffic in the Strait of Hormuz.

Third, while operations continue, the administration is moving to increase insurance coverage for vessels that travel through the Strait of Hormuz.

Fourth, our Navy is capable of escorting vessels through the Strait if the President decides such escorts are necessary, reinforced by airborne overwatch of the Strait. Of course, we always have the option of utilizing our Strategic Petroleum Reserve as well.

So we have options to minimize disruptions to energy prices. But make no mistake, conducting this kind of campaign against Iran 20 or 30 years ago would have been a much bigger energy problem. When we were only producing 5 million barrels a day versus the 14 million today, which covers essentially what we use, it would have been a different equation. Iran deterred us from attacking due to its stranglehold on oil resources. The combination of robust American energy production and the power of the American military means the best Iran can do now is cause a temporary disruption. We will overcome that, and we will be better off for it in the long run.

Remember, energy security is all about domestic security. Energy security here at home is national security, and that is the path we are on. That is the long-term path we are on, which means greater security and safety, lower prices, and stability for all Americans in the future. It is about solving the problem. Are there temporary disruptions and difficulties to navigate? Of course, there are, but the long-run goal is energy security, which is national security for this Nation.

I want to conclude by thanking our incredible men and women in uniform. Our gratitude and prayers remain with those brave servicemembers who are carrying out these operations. They are doing an incredible job.

May God bless them.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

On another note, Mr. President, we also extend our gratitude to the men and women of the Department of Homeland Security who have been working now without pay. We need to fund the Department of Homeland Security. It is that simple. We need to fund the Department of Homeland Security, which is more important now than ever.

We have offered to make reforms to ICE. We have offered to the Democrats “body cameras” and “more training.” The President has made changes at the DHS. He sent Tom Homan to Minneapolis to defuse the situation there,

and he recently nominated our colleague MARKWAYNE MULLIN to lead the Department. We have offered a clean continuing resolution, passing funding levels—get this. We have offered a clean continuing resolution, passing the funding levels agreed to under President Biden.

Did you hear that, Democrats? They were agreed to under President Biden. You are opposing what you supported under President Biden so that TSA workers don't get paid.

How can that make sense to anybody?

I hope the American public understands that because, at some point, they had better call their Democratic Representatives and ask: Hey, how does that make any sense whatsoever?

We have offered to pass legislation Democrats negotiated with us to fund DHS. We had an agreement. We negotiated the bill, and they agreed to it. It passed in the House. We negotiated it, and they agreed to pass the bill, but now they won't do that. So not only will they not pass that bill, but they won't pass the CR that they passed under the Biden administration.

Explain that to me, please. How could Republicans be holding it up when they won't pass their own legislation to fund the TSA? I hope people across the country understand that.

The bottom line is this: The Democrats need to join with us to get the DHS funded so we can pay hard-working Americans from the TSA to our Coast Guard to CISA—cyber security. How important is that? Cyber security—the folks who work to keep our Nation safe.

Look, if Democrats want to continue to debate ICE and ICE reforms, fine. We can do that. But, at the very least, join with us in passing a continuing resolution so that the TSA gets paid while we do it. Come on.

Again, I think the public has to say to our Democratic colleagues: OK. Fine. If you want to keep negotiating about ICE, fine. At least put a CR in place so that the TSA gets paid so, when people go to the airport, they aren't standing around for hours.

We are willing to do it right now—right now. Let's fund the DHS and move on from this unnecessary shutdown. We owe it to the hard-working Americans at the Department of Homeland Security.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

H.R. 6644

Mr. KIM. Mr. President, I rise today on behalf of the millions of Americans who are looking to achieve the dream of owning a home. For the first time in almost 20 years, the Senate is advancing a major housing package, and it is long overdue.

Housing is one of the greatest ways to grow wealth in this country. Yet it is out of reach for so many Americans. Last year, the average age of a first-time home buyer hit an alltime high of

40 years of age—40 years old to buy a home. That is not fair or sustainable, which is why, today, I am proud to support the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act. This bipartisan bill will take meaningful steps to lower the first-time home buyer age significantly by allowing for the construction of substantially more homes at more affordable prices.

To be very clear, this bill is focused on expanding our housing supply and lowering costs, and Congress owes it to all of the Americans we serve to tackle this problem that is plaguing so many Americans around our country.

My home State of New Jersey knows all too well of the problems posed by a lack of housing supply. Jersey is the most densely populated State in the country. Yet, despite this, Jersey has been one of the slowest States in the country to approve new housing construction. In fact, New Jersey is one of the slowest States in the Nation to approve new housing construction. In some cases, it takes 5 to 7 years just to approve new housing and start construction. This is unacceptable in New Jersey or anywhere in this country. We must do better.

To spur the construction of more housing, I championed permitting reform with Senator ROUNDS. These reforms provide a balance between strong environmental protections and getting rid of inefficient redtape, which will help build more houses for New Jersey families and families around this country. This is a commonsense solution that will get more houses built and more New Jersey families in the door.

At the same time, we have to be focused on increasing financing opportunities for new housing construction. As I travel around my State, I hear constantly from mayors who are looking to find ways to finance new housing. So I led a bill, included in this package, to allow municipalities, for the first time, to use community development block grant—CDBG—funding for the construction of new housing. This provision will give mayors the flexibility they need to build more and help more people lay roots in their communities and grow their cities.

So much of this work also depends on strong private-public partnerships. New Jersey is in the center of the country's financial system, and for too long, banks have faced a statutory cap on how much they can invest into communities. I am proud to have led legislation that will increase this cap, which will unlock billions in capital for new housing.

In addition to these policies that I truly believe will spur housing construction and help more Americans achieve home ownership, the package also reauthorizes critical programs that help my State, including the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Program and the HOME Investment Partnership Program. In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, New Jersey received over \$4 billion

from the CDBG-DR Program to build that.

Even more, as we continue dealing with climate events, we must take steps to ensure the most vulnerable communities are protected, including South Jersey, where I am from. Reauthorizing the CDBG-DR in this package protects my constituents and shows that the government is a force for good.

This is a robust set of bills. This package takes the first meaningful steps to address the housing crisis in our country.

The package is also the product of strong bipartisan work in a tough partisan political climate. In all of the policies I listed above, I worked with my colleagues across the aisle. So I want to especially thank Senators ROUNDS, MCCORMICK, SCOTT, MORENO, and BLUNT ROCHESTER for working with me to take smart, sensible steps to lower costs and build more housing. I also want to express my gratitude to Chair SCOTT and Ranking Member WARREN for leading this effort.

At a time when more Americans are losing faith in the American dream, at a time when more Americans are losing faith in the political system and their politicians, this package sends the message that we can still work together to solve hard problems facing Americans. This is a moment for us to come together and get something done for Americans. There is still more work to be done. There are still things that we need to fix. There are still efforts we need to do to be able to build the kind of effort across this country that the American people deserve.

This is not the end. I want to work with all of my colleagues to figure out how we can make this stronger, how we can continue to keep pushing forward and address the needs, until we can finally look our constituents in the eyes and tell them that we have taken the steps and that we have worked with a sense of urgency that every single one of them deserves to be able to improve their lives and help them be able to build the families that they want to. So let's build more. Let's lower costs. Let's pass the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

PETE HEGSETH

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, in my 13 years serving in the U.S. Senate and before that as Lieutenant Governor in Hawaii, I have met military officers at every level. And no matter age or rank, regardless of what they do or where they serve, they are every bit as disciplined, principled, committed, and brave as you could possibly imagine. They are patriots in every sense of the word, and you can't help but be impressed and inspired by them.

But the same can't be said about the man who commands them, the Secretary of Defense. Particularly in recent days since the war on Iran began,

Secretary Hegseth has demonstrated a shocking lack of emotional maturity and a basic understanding of the gravity of the situation. And instead of characterizing what he said, I want to read verbatim a few recent statements:

[D]eath and destruction from the sky all day long. This was never meant to be a fair fight, and it is not a fair fight. We are punching them while they're down, which is exactly how it should be.

They are toast and they know it, or at least soon enough they will know it.

America is winning decisively, devastatingly and without mercy.

What happened to "walk softly and carry a big stick"?

Here is another quote:

Israel has clear missions as well for which we are grateful, capable partners, as we've said since the beginning, capable partners are good partners, unlike so many of our traditional allies who wring their hands and clutch their pearls, hemming and hawing about the use of force.

America, regardless of what so-called international institutions say, is unleashing the most lethal and precise air power campaign in history. B-2s, fighters, drones, missiles, and of course classified effects. All on our terms with maximum authorities. No stupid rules of engagement . . . no politically correct wars.

And this one might be the most bizarre:

We're going to go on offense, not just on defense. Maximum lethality, not tepid legality . . .

This is from the Secretary of Defense:

Maximum lethality, not tepid legality. Violent effect, not politically correct. We're going to raise up warriors, not just defenders.

This is the man overseeing the most powerful military force in the history of the world spelling out his unique and unlawful theory of action. He finds the Geneva Conventions and our rules of engagement, not just logistically inconvenient, but—to use his own word "stupid"—"stupid."

And as we are seeing in real time, there are moral and strategic consequences for the callousness and the sloppiness atop the chain of command. It is very likely a school being blown up, leaving 168 children dead. It is the botched evacuation of American diplomats and servicemembers in the region who are stranded while Iranian missiles fly into American facilities.

But even if you somehow accept the administration's unusually high tolerance for casualties and bad outcomes, this carelessness resulted in them killing the very people they were hoping would take over.

This is not: War is hell and bad things happen. War is hell. We all know that, and that is why most people—but especially our servicemembers—oppose it unless absolutely necessary.

It was Dwight Eisenhower only months after he had helped lead the allies to victory in World War II who declared:

I hate war as only a soldier who has lived it can, only as one who has seen its brutality, its futility, its stupidity.

War presents impossible choices, and wanting precision planning and professionalism does not make you weak. It means that you grasp the gravity of the war. It means that you are not casual about using kinetic force—not because you are afraid, but because you understand exactly what comes next, that for all our military might and capability, war is not something to revel in. Violence is not to be glorified. Death, whether of an Army Reserve officer from Des Moines or an Iranian schoolgirl, cannot be shrugged off.

Immaturity and incompetence are a lethal combination on a battlefield. And if Secretary Hegseth's alarming behavior continues, it will not end well for us.

H.R. 6644

Mr. President, there is a problem with the ROAD to Housing bill, and I will stipulate—I won't clear my throat for 10 minutes about this. I will stipulate that there are a lot of good things in this bill that are kind of on the pro-housing supply side, but what we are about to do is essentially ban a specific kind of housing.

There are about 47,000 units a year that are in what they call the build-to-rent category for single-family homes and duplexes. What does that mean? It means that a developer comes in and builds the homes and then rents them out.

It is small. It is not the main part of the housing market, but 47,000 units is about 150,000 people per year who occupy these units.

Now, there was an original idea to go after hedge fund ownership of housing. What they are doing in certain metro areas is they are using algorithms and buying up individual single-family homes and getting a market penetration that is causing alarm. So there is a provision in this bill that deals with hedge fund ownership of single-family homes.

There is also a section that does a very bizarre thing, which is not only for hedge funds, but anybody who owns and rents out more than 350 units—single family or duplexes—must sell. The Federal Government is forcing a sale at the end of a 7-year period.

There is literally no reason for this, and the problem is that it was written in such a way that it was trying to capture the hedge fund problem, but they wrote it wrong. They wrote it wrong. And so the definition of institutional investor says essentially anyone who owns and operates more than 350 units to rent.

That is bananas. We are now targeting LLCs, limited partnerships, real estate investment trusts, individual owners, family companies, pension funds. Anyone who wants to build housing and then provide it for rent is going to be forced to sell after 7 years.

Why does that matter? Because a lot of these folks are not actually in a position to sell after 7 years. They will not have made their money back.

First of all, if there is a forced Federal Government sale, most people are

just going to say: I am out of this particular line of business. I am not doing this.

But let's suppose you go through with it, and then you are at year 5 or 6 or 7, and you go: Gosh, the Treasury Department is going to force me to sell, say, the 500 units that I built.

How do you sell 500 units? First of all, you have to take your master-planned development where you own the whole thing, and then you have to "condominiumize" and separate out each of the 500 units into fee simple lots for sale. OK? And then you have to kick out the tenants.

This idea that it is virtuous to try to get people into single-family homes with a mortgage, but somehow, there is something nefarious about providing rental housing to people who are not in possession of a downpayment—they are just not.

Of course, everybody strives toward home ownership. Of course, we have the mortgage interest deduction, which is one of the principle means for people to enter the middle class. But if you don't have a downpayment, you don't have a downpayment. And we have decided for no particular reason, other than what I think is a drafting error, to demonize people who want to build rental housing for folks.

By the way, if you are a low-income housing tax credit developer, you are a LIHTC developer, the condition of receiving the LIHTC benefit is that you keep it in rental housing for 30 years.

So what does that mean? It means all these LIHTC projects are going to die.

There is literally no reason to do it this way, and it would take like a two-line fix. But what we were told last week is: I am sorry, the bill is closed.

I am sorry? We have been working on this for quite a long time. This is the first time we have done anything major on housing. Let's get it right. Let's get it right.

And I don't think people are kind of clocking how bad this is going to be on the supply side. And that is why 100 organizations that have all been very engaged in the developing of the individual provisions of this bill, including the National Low Income Housing folks, the Multifamily folks, all of the Yes in My Back Yard folks, they are all saying: We like this bill—because they want to be polite because they don't like to insult people in power, but they are urging us to fix this particular section because it is going to screw up not just LIHTC, but anything that is built for rent that is in the single-family category or the duplex category.

And to just illustrate the absurdity, by the way, if you do a triplex, you are fine. If you do a duplex, you must sell after 7 years. This is positively Soviet. Like it is arbitrary.

We have decided owning is good, renting is bad. We have decided triplexes are fine, duplexes are not. We have decided hedge funds can have their way, by the way, with apartment complexes, but not on the single-family home side.

There is a total illogic to the way that this thing is constructed, and I want to make this final point a second time, actually.

A lot of the proponents of this provision, when I say all of these things, will say: Well, aren't hedge funds a danger to the housing supply, and aren't they jacking up the prices? And my answer to that is yes. And that is why we have a whole different section of this bill that deals with that.

What this section does is says nobody can be in possession of 351 units of housing for rent, and I have no earthly idea how that helps with our national housing shortage.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

DREAMERS

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, every day, Americans across this country are watching as Federal immigration enforcement commits egregious abuses of power. They are watching as this administration encourages the brutalization of our communities.

Now, while the focus has been on certain cities like Chicago, Minneapolis, and Los Angeles—rightfully so because of what we are seeing on our screens every day—The reality is that President Trump's out-of-control immigration enforcement is happening everywhere—everywhere.

I have heard stories in my home State of Nevada where immigration enforcement, the enforcers, the individuals, are following people home after they go to church and where our local police officers are being threatened by them to turn over their undocumented family members who are not violent criminals. It is outrageous. And the truth is what we are seeing on TV and social media is only the tip of the iceberg.

Now, I want to highlight a group of people we haven't been hearing enough about recently who are being immediately affected by this administration, and that is the Dreamers. Dreamers are men and women who came to this country as children. They have only ever known the United States as their home.

The Dreamers that I know in Nevada, they go to college. They become a part of our workforce. They pay billions of dollars in taxes, and they are woven in the fabric of every community in Nevada. And many of them are protected by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, or the DACA Program, as many know in this country.

DACA protects immigrants who came to the United States as children from deportation, and it authorizes them to work legally. Let me just say that again. DACA is a program that was set up here in the United States, and it protects these children from deportation, and it authorizes them to work legally in this country, pay taxes, be a part of the economy.

DACA isn't obtained at random. These individuals—these Dreamers—

these are applicants that undergo intense scrutiny, and every two years, when recipients apply to renew their status, they go through a new background check.

In my State, we have over 10,000 Dreamers who are DACA recipients. Now, across the country there are over 500,000 DACA recipients. Let me tell you who they are. They are nurses. They are small business owners. They are neighbors. They are friends. They are teachers. They love this country, and they feel as American as U.S. citizens do.

And let me just also say this. In the middle of COVID, who do you think was on the frontline of the healthcare industry to protect Americans and ensure that they were safe? It was Dreamers.

But despite the fact that DACA recipients are supposed to be protected from deportation, this administration has chipped away at these protections. They have encouraged DACA recipients to self-deport—think about this—to self-deport to a country they have never been to and they have never lived in.

Former Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem, who was just fired for incompetence, admitted last month that they deported more than 80 DACA recipients. We don't have the answers to why this happened because we can't get a response from Homeland Security.

But let me tell you what it does to Dreamers in my State and across the country. Dreamers have always had to live with uncertain futures, but now that uncertainty is worse than ever. And, unfortunately, DACA is currently under attack in the courts because Republican attorneys general across the country want to tear down the program.

And for Dreamers who are too young to apply for DACA, well, unfortunately, they are on their own. And I will tell you what: Because of that, immigration enforcement is exploiting them.

The administration's immigration enforcement is out of control. You just have to turn on the TV, and you see it. It is overexcessive. Dreamers are fearing for their safety and for their lives that they have worked so hard to create here in this country. We are seeing countless examples of this across the country, and I want to share some of these stories.

Several of them are anonymous because, as we know—and we have seen far too often—this administration will engage in retribution against immigrant families who dare to speak out publicly. But I think it is important to understand that the implications here in Washington and the decisions that we are making are having a real impact in our communities amongst our neighbors. So I am going to share a couple of the stories with you.

In Denver, CO, a college sophomore studying business and her younger sis-

ter, who was about to graduate from high school, were held in an immigration detention center for 4 months. Now, their stepfather is a veteran of the U.S. military, and neither sister has any criminal history, but they were detained all the same. They were detained why and how? Because they went to their scheduled check-in appointment that they were required to do. They were following the law, and ICE detained them and held them for 4 months.

Caroline is a 20-year old nursing student who has lived in Utah since the age of seven. She was arrested without explanation and spent 15 traumatic days in a Colorado ICE detention center, despite having a clean record, a valid work permit, and a driver's license.

An aspiring engineer in college in the Chicago area was deported after passing through airport security on his way to visit his family for Thanksgiving. He came to the United States from El Salvador at age 10 to escape life-threatening violence, and now he has been torn away from his family and his future.

There is Ximena, who has lived in Georgia since she was 4 years old and is currently studying business in college. During a routine traffic stop, she was handed over to ICE and detained for more than 2 weeks before the charges against her were dismissed.

Now, some will say: Oh, well, the charges were dismissed.

Think about this: You are going through your life, you are going to college, you are studying business, you get stopped at a routine traffic stop, and then you get arrested and put in jail for 2 weeks.

A 19-year-old studying business administration in Alabama has been in immigration detention since January. She helps her family run their small business. She volunteers with her church. She is an essential part of her community. But all that is now at risk as she awaits possible deportation.

And then there is Any, who has a full scholarship to study business at Babson College. But while at the airport to surprise her family—again, for Thanksgiving—Federal authorities detained and then deported her to Honduras, directly defying a Federal judge's emergency stay that was issued the night before. Even after this administration admitted this was a mistake on their part, Any still remains in Honduras, trying to get back to her family.

Then we have a music major at school, in New York, and his family. They were detained as they were leaving church services. He was moved across the country during his 2-month detainment, and despite facing and fighting deportation, he is determined to finish his degree and become a music teacher.

Marcelo, a high school student originally from Brazil, was detained by ICE while driving to volleyball practice. Over the course of 6 days, he reported

being held with about 40 men, sleeping on concrete floors with thin blankets, and experiencing poor conditions, including limited showering.

Then we have a student in New York studying education who needed just one more class to graduate. She was swept up during an immigration enforcement action on a public street and was detained for 1 month—1 month—even though she had a pending application for special immigrant juvenile status. Now her education is on hold as she works to recover from her ordeal.

And then there is Emerson, who fled gang violence in Honduras with his mother, 12 years ago. Honor student, star soccer player—that was until he was detained at a routine ICE check—a routine ICE check—and deported to Honduras alone without explanation.

There is a theme. Besides the over-abusive, excessive, illegal actions of this administration, if you notice, these DACA recipients are not violent criminals—just the opposite—because they have a certain status, because they are following the law. They are going to their check-ins. They are trying to follow the law. They have been already vetted by this country. They don't want to do anything wrong. More so than anyone I know, DACA recipients don't commit crimes. They don't even want to commit a street violation because they want the opportunity to stay here, be U.S. citizens, and live and work like everyone else.

I just gave you 10 stories, but I am telling you, there are so many more like this across the country. These young men and women are not the worst of the worst that President Trump promised to go after. They are just the opposite. They are inspirational people who rose up despite the adversity they faced, and they love this country. And in return for their loyalty, for their hard work, for their commitment to this country, this administration is punishing them. Trump and his henchmen are choosing to go after these Dreamers. This is a choice by this administration.

What the administration is doing to DACA recipients—to Dreamers—to their families, and even to U.S. citizens goes against everything our Nation was founded on. And I will tell you what: Now is our moment, more than ever, to say “no more,” to stand up. I don't care what party you are from. I don't care what State you are from. I don't care about your background or who you are. If you are an American and you care about who we are as a country and our ideals and how we treat our neighbors and friends, it is time to take action.

And I will tell you the first thing that we can do here in this body in a bipartisan way: We can pass the bipartisan Dream Act to give these young people a path to citizenship that would put them out of harm's way and give them the full rights and responsibilities that they deserve in this country.

And I will tell you what: This is the very reason why I and many of my colleagues on the Democratic side will not give another dollar to ICE and CBP until we have some commonsense guardrails in place so that this indiscriminate enforcement against our communities stops.

And I will be the first to tell you: Firing Kristi Noem doesn't cut it. That is not enough. Americans want and demand transparency. They want accountability, and they are entitled to it. They want a government that works for the people.

So now, more than ever, when people ask, "What are you doing?"—not just me, not just as a Democrat but as an American, as a citizen of this country, as the daughter of immigrants, the granddaughter of immigrants—I will tell you this: I will continue to fight not only for Americans in this country but for Dreamers and their families and those people that you have just heard about.

The stories are real. I shared them with you today because I am hopeful that instead of just sitting in this room, talking about numbers and policy and partisan bickering, we understand the real implications of the decisions that we make here on the people back home—people back home who believe in the American dream, like my family.

I say this time and time again: My grandfather was from Chihuahua, Mexico. When he came to this country, he served in the military and became a U.S. citizen.

Do you think there was a reason why he did it? Hell, yes. He would never imagine, but he would hope that one day his granddaughter would be standing on the floor of the U.S. Senate, fighting for the same people, for the same rights as every person who comes to this country. That is what this is about, and I will never stop fighting for it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RICKETTS). The Senator from Texas.

WORKING FAMILIES TAX CUT ACT

Mr. CORNYN. I have been taking the time in recent days to walk through some of the lesser known provisions of the Working Families Tax Cut Act that, all of which combined, will make life more affordable for the American people and the people I represent back home in Texas.

Affordability, of course, is not a new issue. Kitchen-table issues, as I like to call them, have always been one of the most important things in every poll that you have seen. But many people are not yet fully aware of how the working families tax cuts are already helping to alleviate some of these rising costs.

And, today, I want to talk about something that is not receiving the attention it deserves from the mainstream media, and that is what reforms we have made in the healthcare area.

Certainly, healthcare expenses are one of the most frequently cited afford-

ability concerns in the country, and we all understand that. But very few people are aware of what Republicans did in the Working Families Tax Cut Act to improve the healthcare landscape under President Trump.

And, again, we have had to do all this because we got no support whatsoever from the Democratic side of the aisle. Just think of what we might be able to do if Democrats would actually get over their Trump derangement syndrome and actually work with us in the best interest of our constituents. There is no telling what we might be able to do.

But in the Working Families Tax Cut Act, we expanded access to something called health savings accounts for those enrolled in bronze, or catastrophic, exchange plans. Those, of course, referred to—the bronze plan, of course, was part of the Affordable Care Act exchanges, and now these are available to people who are in those exchanges as well as catastrophic insurance plans.

What I mean by that is many people may figure out, well, the most efficient and effective way for me to deal with my healthcare costs is to buy a plan, a hospitalization plan, but to couple that together with a savings account, which you can create—known as a health savings account—to help manage your day-to-day or week-to-week or your regular—let me just call it your regular sort of healthcare expenses, doctor visits and the like.

HSAs are a popular tool that allows Americans to set aside pretax dollars—pretax dollars—in a special account where their savings can grow tax-free and use these savings to cover out-of-pocket medical expenses. These accounts are particularly handy when unforeseen medical expenses arise, when many Americans would otherwise have to turn to their credit cards.

Approximately 41 percent of adults in America have medical debt in one form or another—whether it is unpaid bills, loans, or credit card debt—associated with healthcare expenses. Nearly half of this 41 percent owes more than \$2,000—certainly a substantial amount of money for most people. One of every eight of these individuals reported that they owe \$10,000 or more.

If more Americans had access to health savings accounts, they would be far better prepared to face these unforeseen out-of-pocket expenses. Again, this is pretax dollars, so basically you are having your tax rate subsidize your healthcare expenses.

Americans who are generally healthy and don't require frequent medical treatments will often choose to enroll in a lower tier health plan or one of these catastrophic hospitalization plans in order to save on their monthly premium. But when an emergency hits—a car accident, a sports injury, or a sudden unwelcome diagnosis—an HSA, a health savings account, can provide a cushion to soften the financial blow and allow people to avoid in-

curred medical debt to pay these unexpected bills.

In addition to expanding health savings account access, the Working Families Tax Cut expanded access to telehealth services. This was one of the good things that came out of the pandemic, was expanded access to telehealth. Thanks to the fact that most people are now online and broadband has been expanded pretty dramatically, to know that you can access healthcare online without having to schedule a personal visit is a real boon to many people, particularly to the elderly and folks who are homebound. We modified the rules for insurance plans so that HSA high-deductible plans can now offer zero-premium telehealth services on a permanent basis.

As I said, the COVID-19 pandemic really opened all of our eyes to the possibilities of what healthcare services can be provided efficiently and effectively without requiring an in-person meeting or examination. Of course, it can't do everything, but it can do a lot to help fill the gap. Telehealth visits were one of the very positive things to come out of what was otherwise a catastrophic global disruption known as the pandemic.

These have been particularly helpful to those in rural communities where access to healthcare is a particular concern. People now don't have to drive a long way to see their healthcare provider. Many schools and universities in Texas—like Texas Tech University, for example, in Lubbock, comes to mind. They have been pioneering telehealth for a long time because much of what Texas Tech draws from in terms of their student population and alumni happen to be in rural areas around Lubbock, where Texas Tech is located. Folks with compromised immunity benefit as well; they don't have to be exposed to other people.

Thanks to the Working Families Tax Cut, telehealth visits and HSAs are more accessible to the American people. So those are two of the things on a very positive level that we did in the Working Families Tax Cut.

The other thing that we did, which was really important, is to make sure that States couldn't game the Medicaid system—which is the healthcare system that is basically the safety net for lower income individuals—by providing benefits to illegal aliens and thus jeopardizing the limited resources that should be available to only those people who are legally present here in the United States.

We also invested in long-term care for those who rely on services like nursing homes and home- and community-based services. The Working Families Tax Cut prevented implementation of Biden-era regulations on nursing homes that would threaten their very existence as well as that of other long-term care providers. For many of the elderly population who require full-time care, a long-term care facility can

be the best option, but because the Biden administration's burdensome regulatory regime threatened to run these essential-care services out of business, that access to care was in serious jeopardy. So we fixed that with the Working Families Tax Cut.

We also expanded access to home- and community-based services to individuals with disabilities and mental health or substance use disorders. These are some of the most vulnerable and at-risk individuals in the country. I am proud of what Senate Republicans did—unfortunately without any support from our Democratic colleagues—to improve access to care in these areas.

Texas is a big place, with going on 32 million people, and while our urban populations are well known—cities like Houston, Dallas, Austin, and San Antonio—many people live in rural areas of the State of Texas. In fact, that is true around the country. There is a large rural population for whom access to healthcare is particularly challenging. So we made the single largest investment in rural healthcare since 2003 in the Working Families Tax Cut.

Rural healthcare providers have always struggled to stay afloat, particularly in recent years due to these higher regulations, low patient volumes, and the like. Since 2005, close to 112 rural hospitals have closed outright. That is 112 fewer hospitals in rural America, where people now have to travel long distances just to be admitted into a hospital.

Through the Working Families Tax Cut, we established something called the Rural Health Transformation Program, which provided \$50 billion to stabilize and strengthen rural hospitals and providers. Half of these funds were allotted equally among all the approved States, but I am delighted to say that the other half were awarded on a merit basis. Texas received \$281 million for a single year. That will then extend over a 5-year period, so well in excess of \$1 billion will come to the State for improved access to rural healthcare.

These funds, this plus-up over the per capita funds that were distributed, were based on a need-based formula developed by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services—otherwise known as CMS—based on factors like population, the proportion of healthcare facilities in rural areas, and the potential of application initiatives for long-term improvement in rural communities.

Because of the unique vulnerabilities faced by our rural hospitals and providers, the Rural Health Transformation Program is giving States like Texas critical resources to work directly with rural health providers to address these vulnerabilities and best determine the use of these Federal funds.

As I mentioned, the Trump administration has awarded the largest allocation of all to the State of Texas—more than \$200 million—and that is for just 1

year. I look forward to seeing the benefits that this program has for our rural Texas communities and my constituents.

This program marks the most significant investment in healthcare for rural communities in decades, and I am proud that Republicans—unfortunately, once again, without any Democratic support—have made our rural communities a priority under President Trump.

Now, I suspect these provisions may be news to many American people, with no small thanks to the neglect of the media in informing them of what we have been up to during this last year, which is something really significant and important. The Working Families Tax Cut made significant progress toward making healthcare more accessible and more affordable for the American people, and I am proud that, working together with President Trump, Republicans are taking America back in the right direction when it comes to access to healthcare in our rural communities.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, in just a few moments, Senator MURRAY is going to get up and offer an opportunity for us to open up key components of the Department of Homeland Security—components that need to be opened up, components that should not be held hostage by my Republican colleagues while they push back on our efforts to bring in just commonsense guardrails when Federal officers are operating on our streets. The bill which she will put forward has unanimous consent. Every Democrat has already consented to this bill. We want to get this done.

The question now before us is whether the Republicans will object. If they object, it will send a very clear signal that they are not interested in opening up the TSA at our airports, FEMA for natural disasters, or CISA to protect us from cyber threats.

I would hope my Republicans would join us to open up the government as to these key components of Homeland Security. We are concerned about lines at our airports. We are concerned about our TSA agents being able to pay their bills for their families. If Republicans do not object to Senator MURRAY's bill, they will move forward. They will get paid. Those resources will be released. If Republicans don't, it is on them. It is on my Republican colleagues to keep the TSA closed.

Let's be very clear: This is very simple. On FEMA, as we are moving into a

time when natural disasters will be hitting us—we had a natural disaster in Michigan just this week with tornadoes—we need FEMA operating. We need FEMA employees being paid and being able to do their jobs. Senator MURRAY is going to fix that unless—unless—we get Republicans who oppose it, and then Republicans will own it.

We are also at war right now with Iran. In speaking as the ranking member of Homeland Security, probably one of the most significant threats to the homeland from Iran are cyber attacks. They are good at it. We know they are. We know we have to have persistent defenses against those cyber attacks against the homeland.

I will just say, even prior to this debate about appropriations, let's also be clear that the Trump administration has basically fired one-third of all of our cyber experts who would be on the frontline protecting the homeland from a cyber attack. They fired them. They got rid of them. The Agency doesn't have the tools necessary to protect the homeland at a time when we are at war. It is unacceptable. But now we have got to make sure that those folks who are remaining will continue to get paid and have the resources to protect us. That will happen unless Republicans object to the bill that Senator MURRAY is going to put forward.

I will just say, if they object today—if my colleagues on the Republican side object—and we are hit with a cyber attack and aren't fully prepared, they will own that, not the Democrats. The Democrats, right now, are saying to move this bill. We all agree that it has to be done.

I know we might hear some arguments about the CBP and ICE. We know that they are already funded. Let's be clear: The big bill that passed last year basically provides five times the amount of money that is actually in the appropriations bill that we are currently debating; so they are getting their resources. The only thing that is happening, if Republicans object to this bill, is that TSA is closed and isn't getting support, as well as FEMA and CISA, and let's not forget the U.S. Coast Guard and all the amazing work they do protecting us each and every day. We want to fund the Coast Guard, TSA, FEMA, CISA. That will happen today out of the Senate as long as my Republican colleagues do not object.

But I want the American people to be clear: Don't listen to all the rhetoric from the other side. Republicans will own this if they object.

So I would encourage all of my colleagues to let this move forward, and when Senator MURRAY puts forward this proposal, please do not object. Let's do this for the American people.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, in a few moments, PATTY MURRAY will ask UC to fund all of DHS except ICE and CBP. Today, we have a block of floor speakers to preview this UC request.

This morning, the Senate resumed consideration of the housing amendment, and we have been working hard on the ROAD Act, but I don't know if we will get consent. We have objections to speeding up the time for votes; so we might have votes when the time has expired. But that is where we are at on the floor just to let Members know.

So the bottom line here is that what Ranking Member MURRAY is doing is very simple. If you want to fund TSA and if you want to fund all of the Agencies in Homeland Security except ICE and CBP, this is the way to do it. Don't object, and it will all happen.

I don't want to hear any complaints from Republicans about TSA not being funded if they block this today. I don't want to hear any complaints from Republicans about the Coast Guard not being funded if they block this today. I don't want to hear any complaints from Republicans about Cybersecurity—CISA—if they block this today.

The bottom line is very simple. There is a simple way to get this all done. Of course, if Republicans agree to very simple, simple things to do with ICE and with Border Patrol—things that every police department does: show identity, use warrants before you bust in on somebody's house—we could get this done and get everything funded. But the bottom line is, they have refused, probably because the rightwing doesn't like it. So then, let's fund everything else but ICE and Border Patrol.

The bottom line is simple. We should not hold other Agencies hostage. The Republicans should not hold other Agencies hostage—millions of Americans hostage—because of their extreme positions on ICE, because they are backing up the kind of brutality that we have seen. We don't need hostages. We don't need any of that.

The bottom line is very simple: ICE won't change with a new DHS Secretary. That is not going to be an excuse we can accept. You can't fix a rotting house with a fresh coat of paint. So we demand legislation, but until we get that legislation, we can fund everything else. Democrats are ready to pay TSA agents today. Democrats are ready to support the Coast Guard today. Democrats are ready to fund FEMA today, and only the Republicans blocking it stops it.

If they think the American people won't understand this, they are sadly mistaken. They know the administration is in charge of TSA, of the Coast Guard, of FEMA. They know, if there is no funding, it is because the administration is not funding them, but we can overcome the administration with this legislation.

So, if Republicans claim they are worried about the Coast Guard, if Republicans claim they are worried about TSA and FEMA—they can't be too worried because they are blocking it right now—I urge my colleagues on the Republican side to let this sensible, moderate, thoughtful legislation go

through. Let's fund TSA, let's fund the Coast Guard, let's fund FEMA, let's fund CISA and not hold them hostage until an agreement on ICE and the Border Patrol is reached.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in following the leader's remarks, I want to make an additional point.

This is not the first time we have made this offer to the Republicans. On the floor of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House, they keep notes of everything that is said. This young lady is a stenographer, and she keeps these notes together and creates a record—literally known as the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—that is passed out every single day to Members to read as to what happened the day before.

I took a look at this CONGRESSIONAL RECORD for March 5—that was last Thursday on page S870—and it contains a debate between Senator PATTY MURRAY, the Democratic ranking member in the Appropriations Committee, and the junior Republican Senator from the State of Alabama.

An offer was made on that page by Senator MURRAY to do exactly what the leader just said. This was last week. Last week, Senator MURRAY said: Let's narrow this down to the items of debate and contention, the future of ICE and the future of the Border Patrol. But let's fund everything else in that Agency so there is no question that the men and women who work with TSA at the airports are going to be paid on time; the Coast Guard will be paid on time; and the other Agencies—others separate and apart—will also be paid on time.

She made this offer on page S870, and there was an objection.

Now, the rules of the Senate, it just takes one Senator to object. But the junior Senator from Alabama, speaking on behalf of the Republican side, objected to funding all of the rest of this Department, save two specific Agencies. She objected to it, so she had her chance last Thursday.

We are going to give the Republicans another chance. We have been told that TSA is about to miss a paycheck. Think of the thousands and thousands of men and women who work in the airports to keep us safe and whether they should receive a paycheck. We think they should. That is why Senator MURRAY is going to make that offer today. I hope the Republicans will cooperate this day in a way they didn't last week.

It has been nearly a month since the shutdown started. Already, it is the third shutdown of President Trump's second term, the third time. Why? Because the White House and my Republican colleagues refuse to consider reforms of ICE.

Did you see the videos of what happened in Minneapolis? With your own eyes? You don't need my interpretation. You saw what happened to people there, protesting the activities of ICE

who ended up being shot and killed on the streets of Minneapolis. Is that something that we signed up for when we started this deportation effort?

Remember what the President said over and over again? We are going after the worst of the worst; terrorists, murderers, rapists, the criminally insane who snuck in across our border in the past several years. We are going to go and arrest them.

Well, I will tell you this: Sign me up for that mission. We want to make sure our streets are safe. And if someone is here illegally, commits a serious crime, they go to jail or they get out of the country—two choices. That is a bipartisan feeling.

But they have gone further. Take a look at the actual record of ICE and Border Patrol and this mission they have of mass deportation that has been ordered by Stephen Miller, the President's Deputy Chief of Staff.

Six out of seven—six out of seven—of the people who have been arrested and detained and moved to different locations by ICE and CBP were people who had no criminal record, none, not one—six out of seven.

What kind of law enforcement operation is that that gets six innocent people for every person who is guilty? Something is wrong here. We have got to change it.

And some basic questions: Would you want the door of your house to be crashed down? Of course not. And if you did, you would think, It better be for good reason if the government is going to do that to my home and my family. And that requires the court to give approval for it to happen.

It is called a judicial warrant—except the ICE agents believe they are not bound by that law and they can crash down a door if they wish, and they have done it over and over and over again. Do you think that is right? I don't. It is one of the issues we want to debate with them.

When it comes to the masks they are wearing, I talked to law enforcement back in my home State of Illinois. How many of our State troopers wear a mask to work every day? None. How many of the Chicago policemen wear a mask every day? None.

What it comes down to is, we are pushing for good police practices that are applied in communities all across America. Somehow or another the ICE agents think they are exceptional; they don't have to identify themselves; and they can wear a mask. I think that is wrong.

And when it comes to their jurisdiction, it is an esoteric legal question, but it is an important one. How far can the Border Patrol go beyond the border to enforce the law? They believe, under this administration, they can go anywhere in the United States. Previous administrations believed that the statutes had restraint on where they can go.

These are fundamental questions that relate to the Constitution, to the

Bill of Rights, and to the laws of this land. We want to make sure that they are followed, and that is why we are negotiating the future of ICE and Border Patrol.

But today, Senator MURRAY is going to give notice again. We are prepared to fund every other aspect of the Department of Homeland Security. That is something that I think is fair and should go forward.

The Republicans opposed it last week. I hope that they will support us this week. The men and women of TSA should not be held hostage to our negotiation. Let's get serious on getting all the negotiations done. But in the meantime, let's fund the Agencies that are critical in this Department.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, right now, TSA agents are going without pay because Republicans and the White House have decided they would rather shut down all of DHS than pass some very basic reforms to rein in ICE and Border Patrol.

For weeks on end, Democrats have been very crystal clear about what measures need to be put in place before a full DHS bill can pass. These are steps that the American people are demanding and that local police departments across the country already follow.

And we have also been clear that when it comes to reining in these out-of-control Agencies and preventing more Americans from being shot and killed by masked Federal agents, half steps are not going to cut it.

But Republicans are acting like they have no idea what the problem is or what Democrats and what the American people are demanding here.

And now Republicans are not only dragging their feet on the basic reforms, they are refusing to fund TSA and FEMA and other important DHS functions while these negotiations continue.

Now, in my view, that is just plain wrong. If Republicans are going to drag their feet on commonsense reforms to protect their own constituents from having their door broken in by masked Federal agents without so much as a warrant, then they should, at a minimum, work with us to make sure that TSA is funded. At a minimum, we should make sure that disaster relief is not put at risk and that our cyber defense agency is fully operational.

I offered a bill to get this done—to fund all of DHS except ICE, Border Patrol, and former Secretary Noem's office—but last week, after spending the entire week talking about how important these parts of DHS are, Senate Republicans blocked that bill.

But I am here today to give Republicans another opportunity to do the right thing and ask my Republican colleagues to put politics aside for a moment, work with us to get TSA and FEMA funded now, and press ahead to rein in ICE and Border Patrol.

My colleagues know me. They know I will talk to anyone who is serious about getting results. But the problem right now, the reason we are here at an impasse, is not because Democrats don't want a deal. That is ridiculous. It is not because we aren't willing to talk; I have been talking to my colleagues across the aisle all week. The problem is that Republicans are still refusing to agree to basic measures that we need to protect American's basic rights and their safety, the same measures we have been demanding for weeks as part of these negotiations.

Look, this just isn't complicated. Democrats' position here is simple: We want reforms to rein in ICE and Border Patrol. We also want TSA and FEMA funded. But we are not going to be blackmailed into cutting a blank check for ICE to get it done.

So I hope Republicans stop listening to Stephen Miller and start getting serious about reform or, at the very least, stop blocking the funding for TSA and FEMA and the Coast Guard and more while these negotiations on ICE and Border Patrol continue.

So, Mr. President, notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of my bill, which is at the desk; that the bill be considered read three times and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The majority leader.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I just heard the Senator from Washington suggest that they are willing to sit down and talk with anybody at any time. But my understanding is, there have been repeated overtures to the Senator from Washington and other Senate Democrats from Republicans and the White House that have been rebuffed.

Would the Senator like to clarify her position on that?

That is my understanding, and I think that point—that offer has been made repeatedly.

Mrs. MURRAY. To the majority leader, thank you for asking that question because I think it is really clear what has happened here.

As the Senator knows, during the negotiations over the Christmas break, when everybody else was out doing what they do, we did negotiate the Senate DHS bill with our House counterparts, repeatedly asked for some things and were rebuffed every single time, overridden by the White House.

So I am here today to remind everybody that you, Mr. Leader, that the leader spoke to all of us when we came to a disagreement on DHS and ICE funding; that the leader himself said that this negotiation was between the Democratic leaders—that would be Senator SCHUMER and Representative JEFFRIES—and the White House.

So I appreciate talking to my colleagues. I have talked to a number of

them about what they might or might not be willing to do.

But having my experience here—and, I would guess, the experience of a number of my colleagues—until we know that the White House is actually really and not just, you know, a representative, but is really at the table, which is what I believe the majority leader asked for, those are not real negotiations.

I am willing to talk to people, but I am not willing to sit in a room, have coffee, give away a few things, and have Stephen Miller override whatever we all agree to in a room until I have that commitment.

I am certain that I speak for our majority leader as well and for Leader Jeffries, that we need to know the White House is serious.

And what I have told my Republican colleagues every step of the way is, when we have that and we have the White House who seriously says to us: "We believe there is a problem; we understand that; we do want to sit down at the highest levels," we will all be there for that.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, reclaiming my time.

The situation which I think the Senator from Washington is referring to is how we landed at the agreement on the DHS bill that we have been trying to vote on. Subsequently, Democrats walked away from that agreement.

It was the White House, it was House Democrats, it was Senate Democrats, it was House Republicans, and it was Senate Republicans who all negotiated the original deal.

The Democrats have more recently said: That is not adequate.

And so subsequent to that acknowledgment by the Democrats, there have been several, now, occasions where Republicans have offered to sit down and talk with Democrats, and there have been offers from the White House.

And just to be clear, the latest offer between Senate Democrats and the White House—which is where the Senator from Washington is suggesting this should reside—has come from the White House. I think it was somewhere on the order of about 12 or 13 days ago now.

Mrs. BRITT. Thirteen.

Mr. THUNE. Thirteen days ago.

And there has been no response from the Democrats to the latest offer.

And subsequent to that, my colleague the Senator from Alabama and others have tried by approaching the Senator from Washington and other Members of the Democrat caucus and leadership to actually sit down and have a conversation about a path forward.

And usually around here, in order to get a deal, there has to be a negotiation where the two sides sit down together, and my understanding is that has been completely rebuffed by the Senator from Washington.

And so we are here today, and we are trying to close a deal that would enable us to fund all the Agencies that

the Democrats say they want funded, with reforms—with reforms to ICE.

And I have seen the offer sheet from the White House. And they have gone a lot further—a lot further—than any Democrat would think was even possible.

And so we have a situation here where one side is trying to get a deal to open up the government, to get people back to work, to fund the programs and functions that are important to the national security of our country, and we have one side that is saying: We are not going to sit down and talk.

I don't know how you defend that, honestly. I mean, this is a one-sided negotiation in which the White House has put forward a proposal. Senate Republicans have said repeatedly: We are prepared to sit down and talk with Senate Democrats, and Senate Democrats—and my understanding is the Senator from Washington—has said: Sorry. We are not ready to talk.

We have a lot of people who are unemployed, a lot of programs that aren't being funded, a lot of functions that aren't being performed, and they are important to our country's national security.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President.

Mr. THUNE. Now, one other thing.

Mr. President, reclaiming my time.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, this was actually my time.

Mr. THUNE. Reclaiming my time. No, it is reserving the right to object.

The other thing that has been offered repeatedly is a continuing resolution—

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask for regular order.

Mr. THUNE.—that would allow a sufficient amount of time to debate this—

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask for regular order.

Mr. THUNE.—until we actually get a deal.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The regular order is a unanimous consent request.

Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mrs. BRITT. Mr. President, I think you have seen the leader lay out exactly what is happening here. We have political games being played by our Democratic colleagues, instead of putting the people of this Nation first.

What we have just seen put forth by the Senator from Washington would effectively defund our law enforcement officers that are charged with keeping Americans safe. Look, we are not going back to the era of “defund the police.” We are not doing it.

It would also defund our Border Patrol and our customs protection.

Look, catching and interdicting fentanyl has to be a top priority. Under the Biden administration, that was the leading cause of death of people between the ages of 18 to 44.

Under President Trump's leadership, fentanyl overdose deaths are down over 24 percent. We are not going to go backward. We are going to secure our border, we are going to enforce our

laws, and we are going to stand with the people of this country.

Interestingly, what the Senator from Washington has put forth actually undermines the people of her very State. Back in 2023, when the DHS bill passed out of committee, she had this to say:

The Washington State economy depends on our ability to ensure goods and people can move through our ports and borders in an orderly and timely way. Our national security depends on the ability to do this while stopping threats like drug trafficking and fentanyl.

This bill provides critical funding to stop the flow of fentanyl at its source—at our borders—and to protect communities in Washington State and across our country. But, today, she stands ready to defund the very people who make this happen.

And take a look at what that would do, even in her home State. The land ports of entry are many. This is defunding the mission and often the paycheck of the agriculture specialists at the Danville Port of Entry, working to stop the spread of disease and pests impacting our food supply. What she is standing here to do today is going to defund the mission of the officers at the Nighthawk Port of Entry, inspecting vehicles and cargo. What she stands here to do today is going to defund the in-port specialists at the Pacific Highway Port of Entry.

She says: Let's move forward without these people getting paychecks and their mission funded.

And today we say: No way.

Mrs. MURRAY. Regular order.

Mr. LANKFORD. You have to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Regular order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Regular order is the unanimous consent request.

Mrs. BRITT. With that, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, with all due respect to the Republican leader—and I respect his sincerity in representing his side. I respect his sincerity in wanting to find a resolution here. But I need to correct him on one really critical thing. He talked about an agreement that was there and then went away.

Do you know what happened, Senator? Two murders—two murders of American citizens.

My side was not going to stand down and say: Oh, well, nothing happened.

We were going to say: Something happened.

And what we see is an out-of-control ICE Agency, and we are coming now, at this critical time, because this critical moment happened, to ask for some reforms and accountability. That is exactly what happened.

And we are here today to say: We are willing to work on this section of the Department of Homeland Security—on which we obviously have a disagree-

ment. And by the way, which I note, none of my Republican colleagues have ever come out here and acknowledged what has happened to American citizens. And I can sit out here for 45 minutes and outline that. None of them have acknowledged that. So you can see our frustration in saying: Let's fund the rest of Homeland. Our caucus is united on that—TSA, FEMA, CISA, and so much more.

But we obviously have a disagreement and, clearly, an acknowledgment from the White House and the Republicans that reforms and accountability have to be part of funding for ICE.

I remind everyone, as Senator PETERS said a few moments ago, there are considerable funds in the Big Beautiful Bill to continue to take care of what ICE is. I think it is so incredibly important that the Republican leader, whom I respect—and I understand he represents his side. But I would respectfully tell him that having a few Members talk is not going to resolve a situation where we need an understanding—and a clear understanding—from the White House.

He mentioned the offers that have gone back and forth. There are continuing conversations at that level, and I respect that, and I hope that our leaders continue to do that. That is critical. But we have to have that understanding, and that is where we are. This lies with the White House to make it very clear that someone is willing to negotiate with this that understands what has happened in cities across our country—and, in particular, in Minneapolis, where two people were murdered. If we can hear those words, then I think we are on the way to coming to an understanding.

But, in the meantime, let's fund these Agencies. That is what we are asking the Republicans to do with us today, and it is disconcerting to me that they continue to not hear what we are asking for.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. THUNE. So what I just heard was that they are willing to sit down, and yet we have tried repeatedly to sit down with the Senator from Washington and other Democrat leaders to negotiate a solution here. And we have even gone so far as to say that, until we get that sort of a negotiation—and hopefully a solution—that we would fund the government under a continuing resolution, which is done fairly routinely around here, to make sure that these important Agencies get funded, these employees get paid, and these functions of our government that deal with national security and homeland security actually get performed.

And so I guess I am at a loss as to why we continue to have an attempt—a one-sided attempt, it is—to actually sit down and solve this deal, and why we can't then at least fund these Agencies with a continuing resolution until such time as we can.

Now, again, I would point out that the latest offer on the table is from the White House. It is 13 days old. The Democrats have not responded to that, nor have they indicated any willingness whatsoever to sit down with our side and actually talk about how to resolve this.

So you have two things here. You have a White House offer and a willingness by the White House to sit down and talk—an offer on paper with significant changes in the direction that the Senator from Washington and others are asking for. And yet we are just being rebuffed at every turn, even to have a discussion and conversation.

Honestly, I don't know how you get a deal without a negotiation; and to have a negotiation, you have to have two sides at the table. We have one side at the table. Republicans are at the table, willing and ready, able to make a deal—with the White House, I might add.

The Senator from Washington talked about having the White House there, and, obviously, that is an important component of this because we have to get a bill signed into law.

But there is an offer, 13 days old, which hasn't been responded to by Senate Democrats, and repeated attempts by Senate Republicans to sit down and actually have a discussion about this—and complete, utter block resistance. That is—

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President.

Mr. SCHMITT. Mr. President.

Mr. THUNE. That is—

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader has the floor.

Mr. THUNE. And I would yield to a question by the Senator from Missouri.

Mr. SCHMITT. May I inquire?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. SCHMITT. I just want to point out that we heard from the Appropriations chairman that nobody has come out here and acknowledged anything that happened. Let me point out something that the Democrats have failed to acknowledge in all this. This toxic empathy that they have—that really what it means is they don't want our immigration laws enforced.

And let me be clear: We are going to do nothing—nothing—that kneecaps ICE's ability to enforce our immigration laws, because there were no Democrats out here that wept or pointed out that Jocelyn Nungaray, the 12-year-old girl, was kidnapped, raped, and murdered by two illegal aliens in 2024. There were no Democrats that expressed any compassion out here on the floor about Rachel Morin, an American mother who was ambushed, raped, and murdered by an illegal alien while she was on a hiking trail in Maryland. There was nobody out here talking about Laken Riley.

Now, what we have heard from the new Democrat Governor in Virginia is that they are going to be a sanctuary jurisdiction, and they are not going to

work with ICE. They are not going to—actually, on the guy who stabbed a woman to death at a bus stop, they are not going to let ICE know when that person is released from prison or jail.

That is what this debate is about. So let me just sort of pull the veil back about what this really is. Joe Biden let 15 million people in here illegally. This question about deporting illegal immigrants was on the ballot. President Trump was not bashful about it. It was on the ballot, and the American people supported the idea that we were going to deport people—we were going to use our Federal law enforcement to deport people.

They don't like that, and so the way that they get at mass amnesty now is not passing a law, because they can't do that. It is by not enforcing our immigration laws.

So their proposals are not about reform. Their proposals are making it impossible for ICE to do their jobs, and we are not doing that. So let me just dispel you of any notion that our side is going to allow you to continue the chaos that has happened inside our country because you all let 15 million people in here illegally. It is not going to happen.

So the question I have for you, as we have this inquiry, is: It is unprecedented, the idea that we are having policy debates—policy debates—in appropriations bills.

You have done an incredible job, Leader, of saying: We are going to get back to regular order. We have done 11 out of 12 appropriations bills.

And now because the Democrats found their “controversy of the week,” they have moved on to other things. So I am a little surprised they are still on this. But now they want to start pulling things out of appropriation bills—pulling things out. And it is just untenable. It is untenable because—let me promise that you would never do this. If you were in charge right now, you would never allow us to isolate anything.

You didn't even have appropriations bills on the floor. CHUCK SCHUMER never let a single appropriations bill on the floor my first 2 years here.

So now, we are actually working through the process.

So the proposals that we have heard from the Democrats, whether it is on judicial warrants or the other issues—they know exactly what that means. It means they want to limit ICE's ability to do their jobs. We are not doing that.

So you can cry about it. You can whine about it. You lost an election over it. The White House has dealt with you in good faith. You want to prolong this until you get another incident, while your activists are on the streets confronting ICE agents in sanctuary jurisdictions, hoping they get some viral moment.

We are done with that, OK? We are done with it. Your NGO networks, I know they are still active. They are still doing their thing. But the truth is,

all of the incidents that you can really count on, that you can point to that any confrontation happened with ICE agents are in sanctuary jurisdictions where they don't respond to 911 calls for ICE agents, and they don't cooperate with ICE agents.

It is very easy for an ICE agent to show up at a penitentiary or a jail or prison and get somebody and deport them. What is harder to do is when they show up in a community and they have to go get somebody out of a house with more people, and they know that is exactly the dynamic.

So I guess the question is, Have you ever seen anything like this—the lack of good faith? This is really about—and I just want to be clear. This isn't about some reform. This is their final stand in opposition to the will of the American people who voted for deportations.

So I just think that this is ridiculous—and, by the way, especially ridiculous coming from the Appropriations chairwoman, when we finally have regular order on this floor, and we finally are doing actual appropriations bills, and they want to hold it up.

So just beware that when the shoe is on the other foot, we know the tactics. We know the tactics.

Mr. THUNE. I appreciate the Senator from Missouri making that point. The response to his question is, I do believe that we have people who are tasked with an important job, and defunding them is not an option, and I think we all agree with that over here. I would hope that some of our colleagues on the Democrat side would agree with that as well. Are there reforms that can be made? Yes. Some were included in the base bill, which this side agreed to and then walked away from. And I understand why; don't get me wrong. But we are trying to sit down now, and the White House—I think in good faith—has put forward what, to me, are fairly significant reforms. But we don't have, I said, a willing partner. And we obviously are not going to defund law enforcement in this country. That is not something we are going to do, which is why it is important that in the context of this conversation here, as we fund these other Agencies under the Department of Homeland Security, that we also come to an agreement about how to fund Border Patrol, which does secure our southern border, and ICE, which enforces the law in this country.

My understanding is the Senator from Hawaii wants to enter into this.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I thank the leader and Senator LANKFORD for the deference.

In trying to turn this into a little bit more of a debate, I want to ask unanimous consent that we turn this into a colloquy between myself and the leader for 5 to 8 minutes.

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

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I think Senator SCHMITT said it perfectly. We

are actually not very close as it relates to the question of ICE funding, and he made that crystal clear. I won't repeat his words. They were forceful. They were not conciliatory. And he said, essentially: We will be damned if we adopt those Democrats' demands.

So what has been happening is the White House and Democrats in Congress have been trading paper, submitting offers back and forth, and it was relatively professional. But, on substance, we are actually as far apart as Senator SCHMITT is describing. We are not that close.

So if everybody agrees on that, that we are not that close, that it is not like negotiations have shut down, but they are a little stalled—these things sometimes stall. Sometimes they pick up again, and sometimes they stall. Sometimes you are trading offers every 6 to 12 hours, and sometimes you are trading offers every 6 to 12 days. It doesn't mean a negotiation is not happening; it means it is happening as we transmit legislative text from one party to the other.

The idea that the only way we can convey that we are negotiating is with a meeting in person is like literally not the way this place works. There are a million ways to negotiate. Sometimes you negotiate live fire drill, Senate floor. Sometimes it is in the cloakroom. Sometimes it is in the leader's office. Sometimes it is in committee. Sometimes it is by email. We are in a negotiation; however, we are not close.

So if you stipulate to that, then the question is, What the hell do we do about the Coast Guard in the meantime? Do you think we are going to cut a deal tonight to reopen those portions of DHS? There is nobody in Congress—staff, journalist, citizen, Member—who thinks we can cut a deal in time to fund the Coast Guard, the TSA, CISA, and FEMA.

So we can continue this negotiation about ICE, and we should. If someone is going to complain about what manner we use, what modality we use to have that negotiation, fine, but that is actually a separate question from, in the meantime, TSA is going to miss paychecks; in the meantime, our cyber security function at the Department of Homeland Security has a lapse in appropriations; in the meantime, the Coast Guard has a lapse in appropriations; in the meantime, FEMA has a lapse in appropriations.

So all we are asking is to say we continue to disagree about this one relatively narrow thing. We have already funded 96 percent of the government. Let's fund another increment of the government to keep everybody safe. Let's just do that while we continue these negotiations.

Then the real answer on the Republican side to why they don't want to do that is they think that once we fund those other Agencies, the Democrats will walk away from this negotiation about ICE. My view is that we really shouldn't keep the Coast Guard or TSA

or FEMA or cyber security hostage while we continue to disagree about this.

The question of whether or not we fund these Agencies is very, very time sensitive, and so that is why we are pushing for this. This is not an unreasonable—and one of the things that is weird to me is, in another world, in this same context, you could actually see a bunch of Republicans coming to the floor and saying: Why don't we fund this? Why don't we fund that?

These UCs to fund different portions of the government are a tool that both parties have used. But we are in a very unique situation where there is some danger.

So I would just like to understand the leader's thought process—and the Senator from Alabama and the chairman of the Ethics Committee. Why in the world wouldn't we just fund the stuff that we all want to get funded and then keep arguing about the thing we are arguing about?

Mr. THUNE. Which is precisely what the Senator from Alabama was going to do here momentarily. And what she is going to suggest is that we fund the government under a continuing resolution to allow additional time to negotiate, and that has now been objected to on multiple occasions by our friends on the other side of the aisle. But that, to me, is something that we have done routinely around here, repeatedly around here: to allow additional time to negotiate until we can finally land what I hope would be a deal that could fund all of DHS and not individual components or pieces of it.

So I don't know why anybody would object to that—if you are sincere in trying to get a deal, why you would object to funding the government for some foreseeable time in the future. We did do it for 2 weeks, which you guys all knew wouldn't be enough time. But if we funded it for whatever that is—4 weeks, 6 weeks—to allow this negotiation to continue, at least these Agencies are functioning. We have tried repeatedly to do that, and you have consistently—the Democrats, I should say, have consistently objected to that.

So I think what you are asking, I would say to the Senator from Hawaii, is precisely what the Senator from Alabama is going to propound in the form of a unanimous consent request, and that is to fund those Agencies to allow this negotiation to continue.

Again, I don't know how you can be more good faith—at least for the particulars that I have seen. The latest proposal that was put forward by the White House had a number of issues addressed in there that I think were important to the Democrats. It would seem to me, at least, that if there is not an interest in agreeing to that latest offer, that there be some counteroffer made or we sit down and talk about that offer. I think that has been offered up by Senate Republicans as well as by the White House.

So I hear what the Senator from Hawaii is saying, and I think it is exactly what we are saying right now and what we are trying to do.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, just 1 minute, through the Chair, with your permission.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I can understand what the leader is saying. I understand what the Senator from Alabama is proposing. But I think what the vice chair of Appropriations said should not be glossed over as some sort of talking point.

If you are trying to understand why in this particular situation we don't have the votes to provide for a 1-week CR, for a 3-week CR, for any funding for ICE, it actually is that Americans have been killed by an Agency that now has more funding than most militaries around the world, more funding than the U.S. Marine Corps.

You may think this is some issue that we think we are going to turn to our political advantage, but I promise you, when we saw Renee Good and Alex Pretti killed, this became an issue that was beyond politics. There are a lot of us who are not going to provide resources to this Agency that is acting in such a way that makes citizens of the United States so unsafe.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I appreciate the colloquy and the dialogue here on this issue because this is an important issue. We have to break through this logjam. We have people across the country that are TSA, that are Coast Guard, that are cyber security professionals, that are FEMA professionals, that are, yes, ICE professionals, that are Homeland Security customs professionals that are doing a job they need to get paid for. Right now, they are not getting paid because my Democratic colleagues are blocking their pay. They have been very clear on this.

If I can reiterate what my colleague just said—just said: My Democratic colleagues do not want to fund ICE.

The concern from so many Republicans is that Democrats want to be able to pass a bill right now that funds Homeland Security except for ICE, except for CBP. That means they want to cut off funding and basically drain it out and have folks go to their workplace every day but not get paid, week after week, so eventually they quit and no longer can ICE function and no longer can Border Patrol function.

That is the concern here, is that—you are right, as has been stated on this floor just 2 minutes ago—they don't want to fund those entities at all. So what it seems like my Democratic colleagues are pursuing is a way to be able to fund everything else and to be able to starve out what they don't want. They don't want border protection. They don't want ICE removal.

But can I remind my colleagues and anyone else who wants to hear it: What they are blocking funding for currently right now is more than just deportations. Even what they are proposing right now—to say “We will fund everything else but ICE, but CBP”—they are blocking out Homeland Security investigators; that is, Federal law enforcement that goes after drug cartels, weapons smuggling, money laundering, soliciting. HSI are the folks that are actually going after child exploitation. These are the Federal agents that go after human trafficking networks. These are the individuals that actually enforce the counterproliferation in sanctions enforcement. These are the folks that investigate the cyber crimes.

So they are saying: We are defunding ICE. They are also defunding the investigations for human trafficking, for drug smuggling, for cyber crimes, workforce investigations. They are also blocking out the customs professionals that are actually at our ports of entry handling our produce, keeping different diseases from coming into our country based on soil samples and agricultural pieces that are coming in. That is what they are also defunding.

They are saying to Republicans: Just give up. Just don't fund our customs professionals. Just don't fund the ICE professionals. Just don't fund them. We don't plan on ever paying them so they will quit.

I think that is a terrible idea because—help me understand the moment when we get back together and then my Democratic colleagues suddenly say: We have changed our mind; now we want to fund ICE.

It is not going to happen. I saw it during the Biden administration up close and personal. They do not want to fund border protection. I saw it.

The American people do want to have sane border policy. We do want to have sane enforcement.

Now, just a little history here. Thirteen days ago, the White House sent over a proposal. And it wasn't just a secret; the President of the United States posted on social media and made very clear that these are the things he is willing to be able to make the change on that Democrats have asked for. Now 2 weeks later, they are still saying: We are thinking about it. Why? Because it is good politics to say: We are still thinking about it.

What are the things they actually asked for that the President came out and made a public social media post saying: These are the things we will do.

He came out immediately and said: We will do a full investigation of the two American citizens that died—a full public investigation of that. He made that very clear.

Pulled out of a surge that had happened in Minnesota. The President said: In good faith, we are going to pull out entirely from that.

The President then said: We are going to do body-worn cameras and make sure they are all required. That

is what Democrats were asking for. The President has already agreed to that. He has already sent over a dollar amount with the requirement on that.

The President already came out and publicly made a statement where—Democrats said: We want identification on every Federal agent. The President came out and said: I will agree to putting identification on every single agent.

That has all been agreed to.

There was also a statement made by Democrats that ICE agents would not go into what they call sensitive sites to do an arrest. The President already came out and said: We are not going to go into sensitive sites except for one.

One of the demands that were made was ICE could not go into a polling place. Of all things, help me understand why someone illegally present should be in a polling place. But Democrats demanded that ICE agents not go into polling places, which, by the way, is why we want to bring the SAVE America Act up next week. The President said: No, I won't agree on a polling place because someone not legally present shouldn't be there in the first place.

The President came out and said: I will agree to deescalation training.

All those things have already been agreed to 13 days ago—13 days ago—and now, because of good politics, the White House just has to sit and wait, I guess.

And TSA agents get paid when they feel like it, and, in the meantime, the strategy to just try to just not pay ICE agents, indefinitely, until they quit, continues to linger.

So, no, let's fund DHS. There are lots of agreements that the White House has already announced publicly that they want to do on this. They have been sending paperwork over. They have been sending legislative language over. And so far, it has been radio silence.

So let's actually solve this problem. This is a room full of grownups. Let's have the grownup conversation, whether it is on this floor or off this floor, but the last thing we should do is leave this place and not have this thing resolved.

Last Thursday, I was on this same floor, at this same desk, saying: Why are we leaving town without this being resolved? All of our DHS professionals are not getting paid, and everybody is just going home like the situation is the same. It is not the same.

Let's stay here until we actually get it worked out. But instead, we just walked away as if nothing was happening.

So let's stay here until we work it out. That would be the right thing to do for all of those families, regardless of what they are, regardless of what their task is, even the Federal agents that are actually right now not being paid or on furlough that are working on child trafficking, even those folks, which in the current proposal from my

Democratic colleagues, they are saying: We will fund everything but them.

I think we should be paying the folks that are actually going after child trafficking. I think we should be paying the people that are going after drug smuggling. I think we should be paying all the folks in HSI. I think we should. So let's do it.

I yield the floor, and let's solve the problem.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BANKS). The Senator from Alabama.

Mrs. BRITT. Mr. President, we would like that opportunity to continue funding the Department of Homeland Security in its entirety while we have a conversation about the best pathway to move forward.

So I have two asks of my Democratic colleagues. We said this last week. You agreed. Let's try it again. Let's sit down and figure out what is that pathway forward. We can't move the needle on anything without having a conversation. So let's do it, and let's fund this important Agency whose job it is to keep Americans safe.

Look, they do really important work in every one of our States, whether it is Coast Guard, TSA, Secret Service, CBP, ICE, FEMA, and more. It is incumbent upon each and every one of us to figure out a pathway forward.

We have heard more from our Democratic colleagues today, on the floor, than we have heard in the last 48 days. The last offer went back over to Democrats 13 days ago—13 days ago. In that interim time period, we have asked to get together with Democrats, Republicans, and the White House to talk about what is a pathway forward.

Not only have we not received anything back, we also have not had that opportunity.

Look, the people who sent us here expect more. They expect us to have tough conversations. They expect us to figure out a pathway forward, and that is exactly what we are trying to do today. We want to fund the Department of Homeland Security. Republicans are offering a 2-week continuing resolution to do just that.

Mr. President, notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of my bill, which is at the desk; that the bill be considered read three times and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Can the Senator state the bill number?

Mrs. BRITT. Yes.

Mr. President, while we wait on that bill number, I want to say this: Guys, don't change the rules of the game. I mean, the Senate is supposed to function in a meaningful way to do the work for the people that we serve.

Coming out here and wanting to carve this or that without ever sitting down with your colleagues on the other side to talk about a pathway forward or even talk about this plan is disingenuous, and it is starting a new norm.

I can already see, when you all are back in charge, the number of things that this side doesn't want to fund or talk about; and if this was the approach that we took, you would say we were breaking the Senate.

So I ask you today to allow us to continue all of these people getting a paycheck—everyone in the Department. Everyone has to meet their bills. They have to make their payments. They have mortgages. They have childcare. They have wife's cancer treatment—all of these people do.

So we are saying in good faith, let's pay all the members of the Department of Homeland Security while we find a pathway forward.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 156, H.R. 4553. I further ask that the Britt substitute amendment No. 4353 be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, 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 Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, as I have made clear to all of my colleagues on both sides, Democrats are happy to pass funding for DHS Agencies—TSA, FEMA, CISA, and more—while we work on accountability for ICE and Border Patrol. I just tried to pass that bill.

What we are not willing to do is pass a bill with more funding for ICE and Border Patrol and no reforms—to pass a bill for ICE and Border Patrol with zero reforms.

This is pretty simple. We cannot have masked thugs kidnapping American citizens—no badge or identification, no warrant, nothing. We cannot have peaceful protestors and legal observers getting tackled and tear-gassed and even shot and killed by Federal agents.

We cannot just ignore the Trump administration slandering American citizens as terrorists and lying shamelessly to cover up its abuses.

We have got to have accountability. We have got to. Americans' rights are at stake, and, as we have seen, their lives are at stake. This bill from Republicans, which is essentially unchanged from the last time we rejected it, doesn't do enough to meet this moment—not by a long shot.

But look, if the Senator wants to work with me on a short-term CR to fund TSA and FEMA and other important Agencies without providing more money at this time for ICE and Border Patrol, I am ready. I am willing to get that done today.

Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Alabama.

Mrs. BRITT. Mr. President, look, we stand ready. And I am disappointed

that we were objected to being able to fund the Department of Homeland Security, which we just saw my colleague from Washington object to.

The proposal that they are offering does this—our proposal today that we just put on the floor was \$100 million for drug interdictions. The proposal they put on the floor today was zero. When you are looking at the proposal that they just objected to here on this floor, we have \$2.5 million for the Center for Countering Human Trafficking at HSI.

Their proposal that they put on the floor today, zero—zero.

The proposal that we put on the floor that they just objected to has \$2.1 million for increased inspections for ICE detention centers, and they just objected to it.

The proposal that they put on the floor, zero—zero.

The proposal that the Democrats just objected to, moving forward to fund—we just asked to fund TSA. We just asked to fund the Coast Guard. We just asked to fund Secret Service. We just asked to fund FEMA. We just asked to fund CBP, ICE, and our proposal had \$7 million for investigations of child exploitations and forced labor at HSI.

Mr. President, do you know how much was in the Democratic proposal that they put on the floor today? Zero.

We are not going to turn our back on law enforcement. We are not going to turn our back on border security. We will not go backward, back to "defund the police." We will not go backward to the failed border policies of the Biden administration. We are not doing it.

Fentanyl and drug overdoses are down over 24 percent, year over year. We will not back away from that. What we will do—and we hope happens—is that you will sit down with us to have a conversation on a pathway forward.

But, in that interim, you cannot hold these people hostage. There are good people who are working hard at ports of entry and at HSI and all throughout the Department of Homeland Security that deserve a paycheck.

Why are you playing politics with people's lives?

Let's talk about a pathway forward. Let's talk about what we do. But grandstanding and political posturing are not the answer.

I am disappointed that my Democratic colleagues just blocked funding for TSA. They just blocked funding for FEMA. Why? I do not know, but I am hopeful that they will come to the table so that we can find a pathway forward.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. KIM. Mr. President, we did put forward a proposal to fund TSA, to fund FEMA, to fund CISA, to move forward on so much of what the American people know needs to move forward.

We are not negotiating in a vacuum here. We are in a different world than we were when these negotiations began

a few weeks ago because we are now finding our country in a war with Iran. We are seeing American servicemembers in harm's way.

We see this President recklessly pushing on and not caring at all how many billions of dollars he is spending each and every day in prosecuting this war, without the kind of thinking of what is needed to be able to protect our servicemembers, Americans in harm's way, and our diplomatic folks.

So we are trying to come up with solutions here, understanding the challenges that we are facing. These are not normal times. This is not the same world. What we tried to do is come forward here, focused on a pragmatic, realistic approach on what it is that we can agree upon. It is what every family has to deal with in terms of understanding how to be able to come up with solutions that move forward, especially in these dangerous times. We know that Americans have these concerns.

When I think about CISA, when I think about the cyber security world—I used to work in national security in Afghanistan, in Iraq, with so many other challenges in counterterrorism. We need that now more than ever.

I will be honest with you. The fact that this President moved forward with this war without us being able to have a fully functioning CISA, not just because of the budget but because they cut so much of the staff over this last year—these are reckless actions.

That is why we need to be able to have this type of debate, but we are doing this in a context of war. So we move forward. We try to have the funding to be able to move forward in that way on what we can agree on, while we are still continuing, because, as there has been recognition on both sides today, we are still far off when it comes to ICE, when it comes to the lawlessness that we see. We seek the accountability on behalf of the American people.

I hear this each and every day. Just yesterday, I was in a meeting with ICE officials because they are trying to impose upon the town of Roxbury this warehouse detention facility.

This, by the way, is a town that voted for Trump. It is Republican leadership, but they stand unified with me and many others saying that ICE never even talked to them, never even consulted them, whether or not this was even logistically possible, let alone something that the community wants.

When I asked the ICE officials, yesterday, are they aware that there are residential buildings right around this, that maybe people don't want their backyard to be a huge, massive detention site, ICE didn't care. They didn't even bother to ask the local community. That is what we are seeing not just in Roxbury but all over this country—the lack of accountability. They just could not care less what the people in Roxbury believed.

That is what we are trying to stand up for. And I promised that community—again, a community that voted for Trump, with Republican leadership—that I will do everything that I can to be able to restore that sense of accountability and restore that sense of movement forward.

They do not want a single dollar to go to this warehouse, and I don't want a single dollar to go to ICE as we continue to see the lack of reforms push forward.

And I understand the concerns and the challenges that are out there. I worked as a career public servant, an officer at the State Department. I worked under multiple shutdowns. I worked under multiple Presidents of both parties. I don't want to see this go on 1 day longer than it needs to, but I also know that our servicemen and women, they are dedicated public servants; and we need to show them that we are being pragmatic and realistic, that we are moving the needle forward trying to address it.

And that is what the proposal put forward by Senator MURRAY today was about, an effort to be able to move forward, try to focus in on where we have disagreement while not holding back on where we have agreement to be able to protect the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I just want to pick up where my colleague from New Jersey left off, which is the proposal that was put forward by the Senator from Washington, Senator MURRAY, which is to have a vote today to make sure that we fully fund TSA, that we fully fund FEMA, and that we fully fund the Coast Guard.

I have heard a couple times just on this floor from our Republican colleagues that Democrats are blocking funding for TSA and FEMA and the Coast Guard. That simply isn't true. In fact, I am looking at a post. I heard a couple mentions of politics as part of this conversation. Just a few days ago, a Senate Republican post said, "Democrats are forcing 100,000+ Federal employees to work without pay."

Well, this wasn't true then because just last week, Senator MURRAY also proposed that we fully fund TSA and FEMA and the Coast Guard.

It wasn't true when they posted it, and it is not true today. In fact, what we are doing today is giving our Republican colleagues another chance to actually pay these Federal employees.

Now, I don't think anybody is confused about what is happening here, and that is that the American people understand that Trump's ICE operation is out of control. It is violating the constitutional due process of people throughout the country. It is violating the First Amendment rights of people throughout the country, including the right to peacefully protest.

We all recall, like it was yesterday, the fact that DHS agents shot and

killed two American citizens in Minneapolis: Renee Good and Alex Pretti. And then the Secretary of Homeland Security—the former Secretary of Homeland Security turned around and called them domestic terrorists, called the victims of those shootings domestic terrorists.

And from the very start, the Trump administration has lied to the American people about the purpose of the ICE operation, and I heard it again on the floor of the Senate here today. They said they were going to go after "the worst of the worst," people who were here illegally and posed a threat to public safety in our communities.

That would have been acceptable, but that is not what they are doing in the overwhelming number of these cases. In Maryland, they swept up a pastor from the Eastern Shore. They arrested and imprisoned and then deported a small business woman from Hagerstown. She had been here 20 years, Vietnamese-American woman, beloved in her community, had a nail business. And the list goes on and on and on.

And, in fact, Republicans are beginning to recognize that this is completely unpopular with the American people. Yesterday, here are two headlines, one is in the Washington Post, "White House tells GOP to avoid mass deportation talks ahead of the midterms."

Axios, "White House tells House Republicans to stop talking about mass deportations."

Well, they want Republicans to stop talking about mass deportations, but they are not actually doing anything to stop mass deportations. And what Democrats have said is: We want meaningful changes at ICE before we provide any additional funding.

I have been clear: I won't support 1 more penny for Trump's lawless ICE operation, and yet we are not getting any meaningful response from the White House with respect to the necessary reforms.

And so that is why we have said: Let's not hold hostage TSA. Let's not hold hostage FEMA. Let's not hold hostage the Coast Guard. Let's make sure they can continue to operate. Let's make sure that those Federal employees can get paid for the work that they are doing.

I mean, I am looking again at this post, the social media post that Republican Senators put out—Senate Republicans.

It has got all these headlines from around the country, "Partial government shutdown, spring break travel leads to hours-long TSA lines at Hobby Airport." And they go on and on. We are saying we can end this. We can end it today. But Republicans are blocking it.

I just want to close with this point, and it has been made by the Senator from Washington Senator MURRAY and others, when Republicans passed what they call their Big Beautiful Bill, which was beautiful if you are a bil-

lionaire because you got big tax cuts, they cut Medicaid, they cut other health programs, they cut food programs; but as part of that bill, they increased the ICE budget by over seven times its annual amount.

And they increased the Customs and Border Patrol budget by about double its annual amount. So that is why, as we speak, ICE agents are being paid. As we speak, Customs and Border Patrol agents are being paid out of those accounts. You know who is not being paid? TSA. You know who is not being paid? FEMA. You know who is not being paid? Coast Guard.

Do you know what the Democratic proposal would do that is offered by Senator MURRAY? Pay all those people so they can do the work that they need to do on behalf of the American people and get paid for the good work that they do. That is what our proposal does.

It does what Senate Republicans claim on their social media posts that they want to do, that they want to pay these 100,000 Federal employees; but today, through their votes and their actions, they are actually saying the opposite. They are saying they want to continue to deny funding for those particular Agencies because we won't give ICE and its lawless operations a blank check, and we are not going to give ICE a blank check.

The American people don't want us to give a blank check to ICE. But for goodness' sake, let's not penalize folks at TSA and FEMA and the Coast Guard, and let's not penalize the American people by hampering those Agencies and preventing them from fully doing their good work on behalf of the country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, these times are not normal. In normal times in the history of the United States of America, government agents bashing down doors, trashing living rooms, terrorizing children, detaining and arresting people without a judicial warrant would be condemned by the administration and they would say: We need reform.

In normal times, masked agents in unmarked cars without identification on their bodies would be forbidden by the Government of the United States of America. In normal times, mass sweeps in the streets or shootings of U.S. citizens for no reason, citizens without any criminal record, and killing two of them, would prompt sweeping reforms by that administration.

And in normal times, the Government of the United States would say: When we are responsible for harms that violate people's rights and injure them, they should have recourse. They should have redress.

In normal times, that is what would happen. These times are not normal because this administration has no respect for the law. It is not only

condoning, it is encouraging an out-of-control, lawless, and reckless Agency—ICE—and also the Customs and Border Patrol, which is operating unlawfully as a matter of clear statute outside where it should be just geographically.

And in normal times, we would value public servants at TSA, in the Coast Guard, in FEMA, rather than having a Department of Government Efficiency—DOGE—causing cuts, massive firings, cancellations of contracts that devalue and demean and degrade those public servants.

The failure to pay them now reflects that demeaning and degrading attitude toward public servants because this administration has the money to provide those payments, and it has done in the past, moving funds from one account to another in ways that are perfectly possible now, but the measures that we have before us would compel them to pay those public servants.

These times are not normal, and that is why we stand here today to insist that the Constitution of the United States be respected.

Mr. President, 250 years ago, Colonies revolted because British soldiers bashed down doors and took stuff from the Colonial settlers, and America revolted. It took years, long years, winter fighting, George Washington rallying the troops, continuing to recruit and keep them going, along with others, a fraction of the population at that point, enduring suffering and pain far more painful than standing in line at an airport.

But the values and the laws that we are here to defend are what should be normal in America. They are what is normal in our Constitution and our respect for individual rights and liberties. And we are in the minority in this body, as well as in the other House. We are in the minority in the Congress. We have no one in the White House. The Supreme Court is controlled by the majority party.

The power of the purse is one of the levers that we do have, and we are using that power to say no to DHS funding as long as these kinds of violations of laws are occurring and reoccurring, not only in Minneapolis, but all across the country.

And the hearing that I held in the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, a spotlight hearing with people, U.S. citizens who have been dragged out of their cars and assaulted, forced to the pavement, injured, denied medical care, access to phones or lawyers or their families, the hearings that we had with a whistleblower who told us that that kind of misconduct was no accident, it was the result of instructions and training specifically given to those agents, to violate the Fourth Amendment.

And, of course, the brothers of Renee Good, who was killed, telling us how it happened. America is demanding these reforms. It isn't we who are imagining or hypothesizing the need for them; America is demanding them after

America has seen what ICE and CBP are doing.

And we can enable payment of TSA and FEMA and the Coast Guard and those brave and dedicated public servants in those Agencies by simply approving today the measure that the Senator from Washington has so ably brought to us.

Commonsense reforms are not incompatible with the payment of these individuals. Let us pay them now, adopt this measure, and then make sure that we keep faith with America, that we adhere to the rule of law, that we apply the same standards of conduct to Federal agents as are applied to local police in your community.

If your police chief took the position that this administration has done, they would be fired. If they defended local police who bashed down doors without judicial warrant at homes, without consent, and if they defended masked members of their local police force—doing sweeps with masks, without identification, and in unmarked cars—they would be fired. If they opposed the idea that people who are harmed in violation of the law by local police should have no recourse, they would be fired.

So I hope my Republican colleagues will get serious about what should be normal and will decide to do what is best for their constituents and for America.

We are ready. We have been ready. We are simply asking that ICE and the CBP follow the rule of law and adhere to the same standards as local and State police forces and that our Republican colleagues get serious about paying the dedicated men and women of these Agencies, who are working hard every day and deserve our respect.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. Kaine. Mr. President, I have been hearing my colleagues discuss this matter. You know, I think I want to just try to separate out the political rhetoric and maybe also puncture some of the Senate speak we use to talk about the kinds of bills we are considering and just talk about an elemental rule of negotiation that, I think, most of us learned pretty early, which is, when you can find agreement, go for it—do it—and on the areas where you disagree, keep talking. Go for it when you agree, and on the areas of disagreement, keep talking.

If you have listened to this debate today, what you have heard is there are huge areas of agreement on this floor and there is a sharp area of disagreement. We can act on the agreement, and we should. Everyone on this floor, I believe—certainly those who have been talking today and, I think, the overwhelming majority—we have agreed that TSA should be funded. We have agreed that the Coast Guard should be funded. We have agreed that FEMA should be funded. We have agreed that the CISA, Cybersecurity Agency, should be funded.

I think I am right about this. To my colleague from Washington, we have not only agreed that they should be funded, but we have written the bills—exactly the line items—in bipartisan agreement in both Houses. We have put reforms into those bills that both sides agree with—and those bills are ready to be acted on—to give the employees of those Agencies and the citizens who rely on them the certainty that they will be funded through the end of the year. So why wouldn't we do that? That is what Senator MURRAY's proposal is. We have reached an agreement. Let's do it.

Senator BRITT offered a different proposal in those areas of agreement: Let's just fund them for 2 weeks and not with the agreed-upon structure and the reforms and the line item amounts.

When somebody says they want to do a "continuing resolution"—for those who aren't familiar with that Senate term, what it means is, instead of the negotiation we did about how to fund these Agencies, we will just do for the next 2 weeks what we were doing for the last 2 weeks. I call that driving by looking in the rearview mirror rather than driving by looking through the windshield. We should want to drive by looking through the windshield and not the rearview mirror. We have the bills all done.

Imagine you are at the TSA. Are you going to feel better knowing that the Senate decided to fund you for 2 weeks or that the Senate decided to fund you for the entire rest of the year?

How about if you are a coastie and you are on a ship, doing interdiction in the Caribbean? Will you feel better if it is a 2-week deal or if we are going to fund you for the rest of the year?

If you are at FEMA, doing an emergency, we are going to fund you for the rest of the year.

The proposal that Senator MURRAY has offered is far preferable for all of the employees in these Agencies where we have reached agreement than a deal that just says: Well, we will fund you for the next 2 weeks, and then who knows what will happen after that.

So, since we have found agreement—meaningful, substantive, bipartisan, bicameral agreement—on every line item and every detail and every reform affecting all of these really important Agencies, why wouldn't we move forward on it?

I just don't understand why my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would want to do 2 weeks of funding when we could do the full-year funding for these Agencies. The area of disagreement is obvious. It is the area of immigration reform as performed by ICE and the CBP.

Now, I heard one of my colleagues the Senator from Oklahoma say the goal of ours is to defund it until everybody quits. That is a hyperbole that is not true. I have been here for 13 years. I have voted for so much funding for DHS and so much funding for the CBP and ICE, but now the American public

and we all—to one degree or another—just know there have to be reforms. We are not going to give a blank check. We are demanding reforms.

To my colleagues who are here with me, we had a budget hearing yesterday, and the budget hearing was about immigration enforcement. The Republicans had as a witness one of Virginia's sheriffs—the sheriff of Loudoun County, Sheriff Chapman. He was there to talk about immigration enforcement through the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office. I pointed out that I have dealt with them a lot over the years. I go to the Halloween parade and other things in Leesburg. If you are not doing anything on Halloween, go to Leesburg, and go the Halloween parade. It is fantastic. And when you see the Loudoun County sheriff's deputies, they don't wear masks. They wear uniforms that identify that they work for the Loudoun County sheriff. They wear name tags. They use body cameras.

You know, if the Loudoun County sheriff's department can uphold basic standards of law enforcement professionalism, why is it unreasonable for the American public, and why is it unreasonable for Democrat Senators to ask the same thing of Federal law enforcement agents who work at ICE and the CBP?

These are commonsense reforms, but we haven't yet found Republicans who are willing to agree on them. OK. That means we still have work to do. Let's do that work, but let's give full-year funding to all of these other Agencies where we have found agreement, not 2-week funding, not just, you know, we will kick it down the road for 2 weeks and then you have got to worry over the next 2 weeks whether you are going to have a paycheck. It should be full-year funding for all the Agencies except where we are having this most important debate.

The elementary rule of negotiation: When you can find agreement, go for it; and on areas where you can't, keep talking. That is what the MURRAY proposal is, and that is why I so strongly support it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I have to say it is extremely frustrating to me that, despite all their talk about how important it is that we do fund the TSA and FEMA and CISA and more, and despite the Republicans' own acknowledgement that they have already funded ICE and the Border Patrol with their big reconciliation—I call it the "Big, Ugly Bill"—from last summer, now Republicans are unwilling to work with us to fund some of these programs that keep Americans safe while we keep trying to get somewhere on ICE and Border Patrol accountability.

Worse than that, they are acting like they have no idea why Democrats are not willing to accept the premise that, to fund TSA, we have to cut some blank check for ICE. Republicans are

acting like they didn't see the same awful footage of Renee Good and Alex Pretti getting shot in cold blood. Republicans are acting like they don't remember that little boy in the bunny hat who was arrested like a violent criminal. Republicans are acting like they don't remember the family that got tear gassed on the way back from a basketball game or the American citizen who was marched out of his house, in the freezing cold, in his underwear.

As a reminder—because, apparently, Republicans need it—the Senate has had at least two hearings on this since Alex Pretti was murdered by CBP officers. With a couple of exceptions, we have not heard any Republicans in those hearings suggest they want to work with us on reforming the Agencies and reining in DHS. Yet, some Republicans are acting like they have no idea now why we are demanding things like body cameras, visible identification, adequate training standards, and basic standards as the Senator just spoke about. It is the same as our local police on things like the use of force and requiring warrants before some agent smashes in your door and drags someone away.

Republicans know exactly what Democrats have been asking for because, weeks ago, Democrats provided Speaker JOHNSON and Leader THUNE a list of 10 critical reforms that we needed to pass the Homeland Security bill. Unfortunately, Republicans have been saying no on many of these items as far as back as last year or, in some cases, first, they say: Sure, we will work with you. Then Stephen Miller, in the White House, would get involved, and Republicans would say: Never mind.

Now, last year, Democrats were already talking about many of these reforms that we are now talking about today. In July, some of us introduced a bill calling for no masks and for clear identification. Then we saw Federal agents shoot citizens and lie about it, like in the case of Marimar Martinez, and we heard horror stories of masked agents dragging away American citizens for no reason. One American citizen was dragged off and detained twice—not charged with any crime, not arrested with a warrant. He was just picked off his worksite until ICE realized he was a citizen. That happened twice to the same guy. That is exactly why Democrats have been saying: Let's take off the masks. We cannot have unaccountable agents. Republicans said no to that idea.

Then the world watched as Renee Good was shot and killed by an ICE agent and was denied any medical care, something even the most basic training—to say nothing of morals—should have told officers was wrong. So Democrats pushed in our DHS funding negotiations. We said: This is exactly the kind of thing we are gravely concerned about. We need serious reforms and accountability. Still, Republicans said no.

Then an innocent man—an American citizen—was dragged out of his home, in the freezing cold, in his underwear, and agents refused to even look at his ID, which showed they had completely the wrong guy. Yet, when Democrats pushed to require real judicial warrants, Republicans said no.

A little boy in bunny ears was ripped away from his home for absolutely no reason. Republicans said no.

A family on the way home from a basketball game was tear gassed. Republicans said no.

A woman on the way to a doctor's appointment had her window smashed. She was dragged out of her car. Republicans said no.

Then Alex Pretti was tackled to the ground and shot in the back several times by Federal agents—another completely unjustified killing, a murder of an American citizen—and the Trump administration tried to slander him as a terrorist. For a moment, even some Republicans said that was concerning, that it was unacceptable, that that was wrong. But we all know what ultimately happened.

Republicans have, for weeks now, refused some pretty basic steps to make these Agencies accountable. Once again, Republicans said no.

Well, the American people are not going to take "no" for an answer. Stephen Miller is not above the Constitution, and Donald Trump is not a King who can just sic an army of masked thugs on whatever city he wants to punish next. Democrats are not going to write a blank check for rogue Agencies that are trampling on the rights of Americans, nor are we going to accept the premise that the only way to fund TSA or disaster relief is by giving money to ICE. That is absurd.

Some on the other side are claiming the bill I just offered would defund Customs or Homeland Security investigations. That is also absurd. All the bill I just offered does is fund the rest of DHS while talks continue on ICE and the Border Patrol. The simple fact is that Republicans had already funded those Agencies when they gave them more money—than most militaries, by the way—in their "Big Ugly Bill."

And the Republicans' latest tactic—trying to use a war as leverage against accountability for Americans? That is just plain wrong. It is cynical, and it is utterly transparent. We are not going to give Trump a pass on citizens getting shot and killed here in America just because he singlehandedly chose to start a war that has led to Americans being killed across the globe as well.

Who in the world thought that argument would fly? Did Stephen Miller tell Republicans two wrongs make it right here? Did you think that was going to convince anybody?

Look, we are going to hold Trump accountable for his reckless war, and we are going to hold him accountable for using ICE to terrorize American citizens.

As for the rest of DHS that does that important work to keep Americans

feeling safe, like FEMA, Coast Guard, TSA—Democrats are here. We are trying to fund those Agencies while ICE and Border Patrol negotiations continue. But Republicans will neither agree to the reforms we need to rein in ICE and protect Americans, nor fund the rest of DHS while those talks continue.

Now, here is the simple truth: If the Republicans agree to simple reform, all of DHS could be funded tomorrow. And if Republicans stop blocking the bill that I just offered, TSA could be funded today. But Republicans don't want to take serious action to prevent rogue government Agencies from gunning down American citizens. We just heard that on the floor from several Republican Senators who spoke. They don't want to take any steps to make sure masked Federal agents don't kidnap people off our streets. They don't want to pass legislation to make sure Federal agents only target people who have a judicial warrant instead of breaking down windows and dragging away completely innocent people. That is the crux of the problem right now.

So let me state that again. The problem right now is not a lack of communication between both the sides. That is absurd. The problem is a lack of willingness on the part of Republicans to pass some pretty basic reforms or to even fund the rest of DHS while those talks continue.

Republicans don't want to protect Americans from rogue ICE agents. Do you know how I know that? I listened to what they said and what they didn't say right here on the floor. Are Republicans talking about the fact that American citizens have been gunned down by ICE and Border Patrol? Are Republicans talking about the fact that peaceful protesters are being tear-gassed or pepper-sprayed or tackled to the ground? Not a word on that right here.

If Republicans cannot talk about the obvious, cannot talk about the blatant abuse we have all seen from ICE and Border Patrol, how do they expect to work with us to address that? The answer is, they don't. Instead, they are pretending this is about FEMA, which I have offered to fund; or TSA, which I have offered to fund; or CISA, which I have offered to fund. They are pretending this is about ICE funds running low even after Republicans spent weeks acknowledging that the Agency has plenty of funding left from their "Big Ugly Bill."

What this debate actually is about is accountability. It is long past time Republicans get serious about that.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of keeping Wisconsin families safe. Keeping the people we work for safe is one of the most basic and solemn duties we have. We are here to keep folks safe from natural disasters, dangerous drugs, and dangerous

people. That is what I am here to do today, because we need to fund critical Agencies like TSA and FEMA and the U.S. Coast Guard to stop potential terror attacks and be sure that we are prepared for the next storm that hits an American community. I am also here to protect Wisconsinites from ICE terrorizing their communities like we saw in our neighboring State in the city of Minneapolis. We can and must do both. The people I work for are demanding it.

We need to fund these Agencies and put up commonsense guardrails on ICE and Border Patrol. It is not an either/or situation, as my Republican colleagues would have folks believe. We can ensure that TSA agents are paid and stop masked Federal agents from causing chaos in our residential neighborhoods. We can prevent cyber security attacks from our adversaries and ensure ICE and Border Patrol don't gun down more U.S. citizens in our streets. We can make sure communities reeling from disaster get the Federal support they need and hold Federal agents to the same basic standards that our local police officers operate under on a day-to-day basis. Protecting Americans means doing both.

If Republicans are serious about funding the Department of Homeland Security, the path forward is simple: Let's pass this bill today. Let's keep these crucial Agencies open while we come together to negotiate commonsense reforms so ICE stops killing Americans in our streets.

I have been clear that I will not support another blank check to ICE without reasonable guardrails that stop the chaos, violence, and death that we have seen in cities like Minneapolis.

My Republican colleagues are trying to use Donald Trump's illegal war in Iran to get us to back down on these demands. Democrats know how dangerous President Trump's war of choice in Iran is, and that is why I am against it. There is no denying that Americans are less safe today than they were before President Trump took us to war, and I am glad my Republican colleagues are willing to admit it. But if they think Americans will just forget watching the gut-wrenching videos of ICE officers taking the lives of innocent American citizens, they have another thing coming. The American people aren't buying it. They expect our government to stop terror threats and respond to natural disasters, not to intimidate and kill innocent people.

I am not giving up on my commitment to protecting Americans from Donald Trump's out-of-control Agencies that have killed U.S. citizens, terrorized communities, and caused chaos in our streets. I, for one, am willing to compromise. I am ready to fund the Department of Homeland Security without ICE. This straightforward plan funds key Agencies while giving my Republican colleagues more time to come to the table on commonsense reforms that Americans overwhelmingly support.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, every day the Democrats refuse to fund DHS, they choose politics over the safety and security of our great Nation. They continue to be the party of open borders and "defund the police."

This just in over the wires, Mr. President. Breaking: The FBI warned police departments in California that Iran wants to retaliate for American attacks by launching offensive drones against the west coast, according to an alert. That is from ABC News.

We can expect these threats to ramp up every day. Meanwhile, my colleagues across the aisle refuse to fund DHS. This is a political reason.

You know, folks back home ask me: Why don't the Democrats come to the table?

Well, that is just the issue—they won't even come to the table. The White House gave them a new deal, but the Democrats refuse to sit down with the White House and do any further negotiation.

There has been no negotiation any further for weeks now at the subcommittee level, at the committee chair level, at the whip level, at the leadership level with our leader and their leader. They refuse to sit down with us.

That is what America needs to understand. The Democrats won't even sit down to have this discussion. That is because it is a political issue that they happen to like.

But we are a party of law and order. We are a party and we are a nation that wants secure borders, and we want law and order.

Every day that they refuse to fund DHS, they are denying the urgent need to secure our borders against millions of unvetted, illegal immigrants and fentanyl floods killing Americans daily, proving they are the party of open borders.

Every day that they deny funding for DHS, they are denying funding for law enforcement heroes in DHS, embracing their "defund the police" agenda that lets criminals roam free and terrorize communities.

They are denying critical cyber security. People aren't getting this. DHS oversees the cyber security protections for our power grids and infrastructure, inviting attacks from enemies like Iran amid escalating threats.

They are denying resources for combating human trafficking and child exploitation through HSI, abandoning vulnerable victims to cartels they empowered with lax policies.

How do they not negotiate with this on the line, with American safety on the line?

They deny the economic hardship on union workers and Federal employees furloughed in their shutdown stunt, betraying blue-collar families they claim to champion.

They are denying the bipartisan legacy of DHS by blocking reforms and

oversight, allowing Executive overreach that weakens congressional checks and American sovereignty.

They are denying the blood on their hands from terror risk, migrant crimes, and disaster response failures, prioritizing radical politics over national security and lives.

Every day, it is the Democrats' fault that American lives are at risk. I ask them: Quit your games. Quit the politics. Come to the table and make America safe again.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Ms. LUMMIS. Mr. President, I have been listening to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle so I can try to understand their arguments.

On my side of the aisle, we have been told that the Democrats in the Senate will not meet with the Republicans in the Senate about this issue. Yet we have had Democrat after Democrat on this floor this afternoon complain that they can't get meetings with Republican Senators. They won't meet with Republican Senators. They say: We only want to meet with the President.

Now we hear the President has submitted a proposal to them that is extremely reasonable. That is what we hear on the Republican side of the aisle. We haven't seen the President's proposal to the Democrats because they won't show it to us. It makes me wonder whether the President's proposal was so reasonable that they don't want to show it to us, that they don't want to be put in the position of having to agree with a President that they truly despise as an individual.

The whole Nation is being held up by this. So I want to apologize to the American people—especially to the TSA agents, the FEMA workers, and other Agencies within the Department of Homeland Security who are not getting paid. I want to apologize to the American people who are standing in lines at airports trying to get through TSA to get on airplanes, and they are stuck in those lines for 3 and 4 hours. I want to apologize to the people in my State—the day before yesterday—who live in the city of Wright, WY, where there was an over-1,500-acre fire heading in the direction of Wright, and no one from FEMA was available to help advise with regard to those issues.

These things are happening around our country today. Yet we have Democrats in this Senate saying “The Republicans won't work with us,” and we have Republicans in this Senate saying “The Democrats won't even speak to us.” It sounds like two ships passing in the night in the Senate.

Now, the odd thing is that when we are not in front of the cameras—we are not on C-SPAN; we are not on this floor making speeches—we actually do talk to each other; we actually do get along. Yet here we are at an impasse that has us hurling disagreements at each other that don't even reflect an assessment.

If I was watching this on C-SPAN and I was just a citizen, I would say: I don't get this. They are acting as if they don't know what the other side is doing or thinking.

Well, even being here in this body, I don't know what the other side is thinking. I hear them say they are mad because ICE agents are wearing masks and don't have warrants, and there are a couple of things there that I would point out.

The reason ICE agents started wearing masks is because truly belligerent protesters were identifying those ICE agents and then going to their homes and their children's schools and threatening their families. So they put on masks so, as they are doing their job, the protesters cannot identify them and harass their families and them for doing their job.

Then I hear that this is about the fact that some Americans—protesters—were killed in Minneapolis. We all mourn those deaths. But those were protesters who were not innocent bystanders. They were protesting in a very provocative way, taking on ICE agents directly—either using their cars and yelling and throwing rocks at ICE agents. That is not innocence. It doesn't mean they should have been shot, but it does mean they were not behaving in an innocent manner.

But let's look at who was behaving in an innocent manner. Laken Riley was out jogging in Georgia when an illegal alien came up and killed her and she fought back and they smashed her until she was dead. That was an innocent bystander.

The little girl who was raped and thrown to the side of the road in Texas—that was an innocent bystander.

The mother who was jogging here back east, the mother of four kids who was attacked and murdered while jogging—that was an innocent bystander.

The problem I have with this whole discussion is we are showing tremendous sympathy for American protesters who were encountering ICE agents in a provocative way, and we have forgotten about the innocent Americans who were killed by illegal criminals—some of whom had been previously arrested in this country and turned loose.

When trying to eradicate this country of the illegal criminals who are harassing people in this country, are killing people in this country, are raping people in this country, are human trafficking in this country, we are taking our eye off the reason that ICE exists in the first place. We are taking our eye off the American people who just want to feel safe when they go for a jog, when their kids are out riding their bikes.

I do feel terrible about the Americans who were provoking ICE agents and were killed in the process, but I feel more sorry for the parents, the children, the husbands and wives who lost their family members through no fault of the innocent victim.

So we are in a terrible conundrum here. We have the Democrats refusing to pay TSA, Homeland Security Agencies like FEMA, if ICE agents aren't required to strip those masks off their faces when they are arresting people. But the Democrats aren't acknowledging that those masks were worn simply for the ICE agents to protect themselves and their own families.

What a conundrum we are in, and the innocent American people standing in TSA lines are bearing the brunt of this, the employees of the Federal Government who haven't received a paycheck are bearing the brunt of this.

I wish the cameras weren't on. I wish we could have discussions on things like this the way our Constitution was drafted. Those were not open discussions. There were no cameras. The Founders weren't playing to the cameras. In fact, they locked themselves in a hot, humid, stinky room until they came up with the greatest document that has ever been written in a secular manner by mankind, and here we are defending that document today and debating it.

So I would ask my Democrat colleagues: Sit down with KATIE BRITT, sit down with our Senate colleagues on our side of the aisle. Bring your own colleagues who feel strongly about this, who are passionate about this. Sit down and have a discussion among us. I know you too well. You are reasonable when you want to be. We are reasonable when we want to be. So let's turn off the stupid cameras and have a family conversation for the good of the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

IRAN

Mr. REED. Mr. President, 23 years ago this month, President George W. Bush launched the invasion of Iraq. The speed, power, and sophistication of the American military campaign was astounding. Within 3 short weeks, the United States had crushed the Iraqi army and collapsed Saddam Hussein's entire government. Our military victory was swift and total, as expected.

A few months before the invasion, I delivered a speech here on the Senate floor. I spoke about the evil of Saddam's regime, the dangerous threat the Iraqi military posed, and the importance of confronting Iraq through all practical means, but I also cautioned against the pitfalls of the Bush administration's strategy, which I considered to be terribly misguided.

As I observed at the time:

Our judgment cannot rest simply on [Saddam's] unalloyed evil. We must consider our actions more broadly. Will we enhance the stability and security of the region? Will we strengthen our security not just for the moment, but for the future as well? What kind of precedent will we establish? . . . We will decisively defeat Iraqi military forces in any conflict.

Yes.

The skill and courage of our forces, aided by superb technology, will overwhelm Iraqi

resistance. The military outcome is certain, but the cost and the consequences are uncertain and could be quite grave.

I take no satisfaction in that warning. I wish Iraq had been the brief, decisive victory the Bush administration promised it would be. The reality turned out to be two decades of destruction, death, and instability that has cost our Nation dearly.

I am standing here today because the Trump administration's war against Iran raises the same concerns and more. The parallels between March 2003 and March 2026 are striking and cannot be wished away no matter how loudly the Trump administration shouts down those of us who have noted as much. In both cases, the United States launched a massive air campaign with thousands of strikes on air defenses, command centers, leadership targets, and weapons infrastructure. In both cases, the early military results were dramatic and impressive. And in both cases, the administration stood before the cameras and promised the American people that the hard part was done.

Indeed, in 2003, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld claimed:

It could last six days, six weeks. I doubt 6 months.

Similarly, just a few days ago, Secretary Hegseth said:

You can say four weeks, but it could be six, it could be eight, it could be three.

There are many other parallels to these two conflicts, but in some cases, the differences between 2003 and 2026 are more alarming as this war begins.

In 2002, President Bush made a case for war. I disagreed with that case profoundly. In fact, I voted against the authorization for the use of military force in Iraq—1 of only 23 Senators to do so. But we had a vote. The Bush administration came to Congress, presented intelligence—however flawed—testified before committees, and sought the buy-in of the American people.

President Bush went through the steps that any responsible Commander in Chief must, and this body deliberated and decided. We had the information needed to cast a vote; every Senator did.

Importantly, I would note that even with all that deliberation in 2002, President Bush still failed catastrophically. He tied our military up in a disaster that took decades and hundreds of thousands of lives to partially unravel.

Today, President Trump has bypassed or ignored this most necessary process in a democracy. The American people woke up last Saturday to find themselves at war with Iran. There was no vote, there was no authorization for the use of military force, nor intelligence shared with Congress—who are the representatives of 350 million Americans—and no coalition of allies and partners were assembled or brought into the plan. In fact, several of our closest friends in the Middle East were, by all accounts, as surprised

as anyone by the joint American and Israeli attack.

Many of them—Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, the UAE, Oman, Jordan, Iraq, and others—are suffering the consequences of Iranian retaliation without having been involved in this decision that triggered it. And the administration has left thousands of Americans stranded in harm's way without, for many, a realistic means of getting home.

As impressively as our military has performed, I must ask my Republican colleagues this: Do you believe that the Trump White House has devoted even a fraction of the strategic effort that the Bush administration put into Iraq? Because the Bush administration at least thought about it. They were wrong, but they undertook preparations for more than a year. What is the evidence of that same seriousness with today's military operation?

Now, we must understand Iran is not Iraq. I want to be clear about this because it matters enormously to what comes next.

Saddam Hussein's government, for all its brutality, was a hollowed-out institution propped up by fear and oil. The Iranian regime is something altogether different. It is deeply entrenched by half a century in power. It is woven into the economic, military, and religious fabric of a nation of 93 million people.

The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps—the IRGC—is not a conventional military that will dissolve because the Ayatollah has been killed—just the opposite. It has shown its willingness to absorb pain and endure. It is an ideological institution with deep roots, considerable resources, and a demonstrated willingness to direct violence across the entire region.

Iran's missile and drone arsenal dwarfs anything Iraq possessed, and it has a vast network of proxy forces, from Hezbollah in Lebanon, Shia militias in Iraq and Syria, to the Houthis in Yemen. These forces, although diminished and disrupted from the past several years of fighting, represent a military capacity that has shown it can cause real pain for our troops, our allies and partners, and the global economy.

We have already experienced deadly Iranian retaliatory strikes against American bases across the Middle East. Just because their missile strikes have slowed down, we should not be given the false confidence that they are finished. This regime is cunning.

The Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of the world's oil supply flows, is now essentially closed. Energy prices are spiking, and the stock markets are falling as a result. Further, cyber attacks on our critical infrastructure here—our financial systems, our energy grids, our military networks—are very possible.

We cannot overlook another fact. The administration has refused to rule out deploying American forces into

Iran. Let me say that again. The administration will not rule out putting American boots on Iranian soil. That kind of invasion would not just be a difficult campaign; it would, in my view, be catastrophic. Indeed, it would make the Iraq operation look rather straightforward by comparison.

Further, there has been speculation about not a major land operation but the potential for a Special Forces operation to seize Iran's enriched uranium. This would be exceedingly difficult and would require deploying hundreds of our forces deep into Iran, at great peril. Even if successful, such an operation would not change the Government of Iran and, although dealing perhaps a serious setback, would likely harden the fanatical approach of the IRGC and increase the degree and duration of retaliation.

Like in 2003, I am disappointed by the lack of scrutiny from my Republican colleagues. These are basic questions that remain unanswered. What are President Trump's objectives? I have listened carefully to this administration, and their rationale has shifted constantly—from protecting Iranian protesters, to eliminating Iran's nuclear program, to destroying its ballistic missile arsenal, to what now appears to be regime change. President Trump declared last week that he wants no less than unconditional surrender and he should have a role in choosing Iran's next leader. These comments reveal a stunning failure to understand Iran and its history.

I worry that the President and his advisers have convinced themselves they are immune from the lessons of history. Destroying Iran without a credible postwar plan is not likely to create a stable, democratic state. Instead, it could create a chaotic power vacuum that drags in the rest of the Middle East. Ironically, it could further entrench the most radical elements of Iran's leadership to be even more organized and ruthless and could send the message across the globe that acquiring a nuclear weapon is the ultimate path to avoiding President Trump's unpredictable wrath.

Beyond the lack of strategic planning, I am also troubled by the military readiness and financial cost of this conflict. The Senate Armed Services Committee has sent formal inquiries to the Department of Defense requesting projected costs, which by some estimates could run as high as \$1 billion a day. Reports indicate that the administration is already preparing a supplemental appropriation request to Congress for emergency funding—potentially more than \$50 billion—to backfill the massive munitions loss and battle damage incurred in the opening days of this war.

But let me be very clear: I will not support a blank check for this war of choice.

In the same 2003 speech I discussed earlier, I asked several questions that I believe history has since validated.

We are debating Iraq today, but will we apply this preemptive doctrine to Iran or North Korea tomorrow? How do we prevent others from adopting this same strategy if we have enshrined it as the centerpiece of our policy? For example, how do we counsel the Indians to refrain from preemptively attacking Pakistan or vice versa? From New Delhi or Islamabad, the threat looks “sufficient” and striking first is enticing.

That question is no longer hypothetical. Today, China is watching our war against Iran with intense interest as it considers its posture toward Taiwan. Russia is watching as it calculates what remains possible beyond Ukraine. They are also very much enthused by the extraordinary increase in the price of oil and restrictions taken off by the United States on their sales in certain countries. What was a floundering economy is now getting strengthened by our actions in the Middle East, which will have, I think, severe consequences in Ukraine and elsewhere.

When the United States launches preemptive wars—whether in Iran, in Venezuela, or perhaps Cuba—without bothering to make any public case or good-faith legal argument, we diminish American power; we give permission for other nations to throw their own military weight against their neighbors; we hand every ambitious autocrat in the world the same justification we have just used ourselves. The precedent we set today will outlast this Presidency by decades.

Make no mistake, the Iranian regime is a brutal, corrupt institution that has denied its people basic rights for nearly 50 years. I do not mourn Ayatollah Khamenei. I do not minimize the genuine threat that Iran’s nuclear program and missile arsenal represent to the United States and our allies. The day the Iranian regime is replaced by a government that genuinely serves the Iranian people will be a good day for the world. But, recall, President Trump ripped up the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action—a real diplomatic framework that was constraining Iran’s nuclear ambitions. He refused to negotiate a replacement.

Just 2 weeks ago, the Omani Foreign Minister, who served as a key intermediary between Washington and Tehran, reported that there had been significant progress in the ongoing negotiations just before these strikes began. The President broke the diplomatic solution and is now trying to bomb his way out of a crisis of his own making. He had other, better, choices. He chose war, and now, he owes the American people a full accounting.

I would ask my colleagues who support this war the same questions I have been directing to the administration. What is the theory of victory? What does success look like, and how will we know when we have achieved it? What legal authority does the administration believe it is operating under given that this Congress has not authorized this conflict? What is the day-after plan for Iran—for its government, its 93

million citizens, its borders, its proxies? What is the plan if this regime does not fall, if the Revolutionary Guard fights on for years? Will the administration commit that American ground forces will not be sent into Iran?

To my Republican colleagues, I urge you to ask these same questions and to demand answers from the administration. History is watching, and in 20 years, you, too, may wish you held this President to greater account.

So far, seven American servicemembers have been killed. Hundreds more have been wounded. To their families, this Chamber—on both sides—owes our deepest condolences and our solemn commitment to ensure their sacrifice is honored. America’s sons and daughters have gone into harm’s way carrying the full weight of this Nation’s trust. They deserve leadership and a strategy worthy of their service.

I had the great privilege to serve in the U.S. Army. I believe in American power, and I believe we should be willing to use it. I believe in American leadership on the global stage. But power without wisdom or restraint is just recklessness, and leadership without accountability or conscience is just theater, a performance to serve the President’s ego, not America.

Mr. President, I will close by recalling the same words with which I concluded my remarks on this floor 23 years ago:

Great events will turn on our deliberations. But, at this moment, my thoughts are not on historic forces. Rather, I think about the young Americans who will carry out our policies. They are prepared to sacrifice everything. We owe them more than we can ever repay. One thing that we certainly owe them is our best judgment. I have tried to give them mine.

Mr. President, those words are no less true today. The young men and women the President has sent into this conflict are prepared to give everything. We owe them our unsparing questions. The President owes them a plan. We owe them the honest and rigorous judgment of the Commander in Chief and the leaders he has entrusted with the gravest decisions a democracy can make.

I have tried, again, to give my best judgment, and I urge my colleagues to give theirs.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. 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 Minnesota.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today as our country is in the middle of a war to urge my Republican colleagues to support Senator MURRAY’s

proposal that would immediately fund the Department of Homeland Security’s critical national security functions—cyber defense, airport safety, the Coast Guard—while negotiations continue on critical reforms on ICE and Border Patrol.

We must restore accountability. No one knows that better than the people of Minnesota with these Agencies, but there is absolutely no reason that we can’t do two things at once, and that is fund the bulk of this Department while we are working on the reforms to these two Agencies, both of which have ample funding.

We all saw what happened in Minnesota where the surge of ICE agents—as local law enforcement in our State made it repeatedly clear—it sadly made our State less safe.

Two of my constituents were killed, Renee Good and Alex Pretti. In fact, in the month of January, two out of three of shooting fatalities—two out of three—in the city of Minneapolis were committed by Federal agents in the entire month.

ICE wrongly arrested a Hmong elder, dragged him out in his underwear as he is trying to show his ID and they didn’t see it, drove him around in a car for an hour only to discover they had the wrong guy. The guy they were looking for had been in prison for years.

They targeted kids. We saw 5-year-old Liam in his blue rabbit hat with floppy ears and his Spider-Man backpack.

They stopped a number of off-duty police officers. One of our suburban police chiefs told the story of a police officer where the ICE agents literally took out their guns—every one of those police officers were people of color—and they repeatedly violated the Constitution and defied court orders.

So many people trying to show their IDs shoved into cars, dropped off four blocks later, maybe for the bounties, or taken to the Whipple center and released.

Beyond the human cost, Operation Metro Surge cost taxpayers in Minnesota \$18 million a week and Minnesota’s economy \$80 million a week, and we are still recovering.

But our State stood up together, bringing food, protesting, making sure that people got their kids to school, people bringing strangers’ kids to school, and we got an announcement finally of a drawdown to the original footprint.

I just talked to Director Homan about this last week, and he promised to me that they would keep to that plan of the original footprint. They announced some reforms for how those remaining ICE agents and Border Patrol would do their jobs.

But, of course, we want to make that permanent.

And then last week at the oversight hearing, I pressed Secretary Noem, and what we got through not just my questioning but my colleagues’, including my Republican colleagues, was a refusal to admit her mistakes or take responsibility for her actions.

So her overdue removal from the Department of Homeland Security is also a good step toward accountability.

This is a start. And the reason that we want to get these reforms put into law is obvious. We are talking about basic police conduct that you see in red and blue States across our country. That is what we are asking for, those standards of conduct.

But as those negotiations continue, what makes the most sense, especially right now, is to make sure that we fund those other Agencies. It is not written in law that you can't negotiate on part of an Agency—and in this case, ICE, and the activities of these Border Patrol agents—that you can't negotiate on that while you are funding the rest of the Agency.

I would hope that our Republican colleagues would actually welcome that because that is a way to make sure that we are getting funding and paychecks are getting delivered, while at the same time, we are doing these negotiations.

And while I did not agree in any way with that major funding increase to ICE—that money could have been used to local police or to pay down the debt, \$75 million—but that is what that money went toward, and so they have that money now.

So why don't we focus on getting the rest of the Agency funded?

That is why we put this forward, and that way, we could fund disaster relief, cyber security defense, airport security, and the Coast Guard.

So when people vote against that to fund those important functions, they are blocking pay for TSA agents who keep us safe, and that is, unfortunately, by not taking this agreement, what we are seeing; funds for FEMA; Coast Guard protects our ports and our shorelines; funding for Cybersecurity, which among many things secures our elections, protects our information technology.

So I ask our colleagues: Why—instead of just doing this compromise—I think they could have proposed the same thing, and we would have definitely supported it.

Why would they want so badly to keep ICE with no reforms that they won't fund the rest of this Agency? It doesn't make any sense, especially since we are proposing commonsense reforms, especially when we are acknowledging, OK, you are not going to agree to it today, but we think it is important to fund the rest of this Agency today so we can keep negotiating with you to fund ICE in the future, but only with these reforms.

I ask my Senate Republican colleagues to join us in this pragmatic proposal. I urge them to listen to the American people who do want to see reforms to ICE and Border Patrol. I think they know that, but the American people also want to fund the important work of FEMA and the Coast Guard and TSA and Cybersecurity.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

NATIONAL PARKS

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, let me start off by pointing out that New Mexico is home to one of the most important living cultural landscapes in the United States. You may have heard of it. It is known as Chaco Canyon. It is a world heritage site and a national historical park. It is truly breathtaking if you have ever been there, and when you are there, with the immense sky above, you feel like time is converging centuries and centuries of history—the bustling lives of farmers and architects, builders, astronomers, and religious leaders from centuries ago, converging with the scurry of nearby wildlife and the hushed murmurs of respectful, odd visitors. These are all layered onto each other in what for many remains a living, sacred place.

It is designated a national historical park to tell the stories of the people who lived on this land long before America was even a nation and of those who continue to use these lands to connect to a story bigger than any one person.

Every year, millions of Americans and international visitors alike learn parts of our Nation's story through the places preserved and stewarded by the National Park System—places like Chaco Canyon. These places tell the story of us—how we became America and how we have grown and changed as a nation. It is a story of triumph, of hardship, of resilience, and sometimes of cruelty.

Not every chapter in this story is uplifting, but to understand who we are as Americans and our journey to become what Ronald Reagan rightly called a “shining city upon a hill,” we have to learn from all of it. We can't erase or turn away from the hard parts because those parts and, more importantly, how we learned and grew from them are our shared history, our shared story, and they should never be erased or twisted for politics. But that is just what the Trump administration is trying to do—to censor our history.

One year ago, President Trump signed an Executive order directing Federal Agencies to review how national park sites portray American history. The Executive order required officials to make sure that the Park Service sites did not display content that “inappropriately disparage(s) Americans past or living.” As a result of this order, they have already removed some content, and much of it is in the most popular national parks in the American West.

In a spreadsheet summarizing the Interior Department's first review last year, Mother Jones found that from 33 sites in the Park Service region that includes my State, 81 submissions had been flagged for review. Of those 81, the Department decided that 46 should be altered or removed entirely—over half.

But this isn't only happening in the West. Signs related to ecology and the

Wabanaki cultural history were completely removed at Acadia National Park. At Stonewall National Monument in New York, mentions of Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera—pioneering activists central to the 1969 Stonewall uprising—were scrubbed completely, and this photo showing what enslaved people experienced at the hands of their enslavers.

Let that photo sit with you for just a moment. This photo, which shows how painful our history can be, was ordered to be removed because it is “disparaging of Americans.” This is not disparaging. This is truth. This is reality. We cannot be a better nation or a stronger one if we ignore or hide from our own past. We are a great nation because we have learned from our past, especially from our mistakes, but we can't do that when we take photos down like this one.

Unfortunately, this was just one of the Trump administration's attempts to hollow out our American story. Another came earlier this year when the Department of the Interior asked National Park staff to spend hundreds of hours reviewing their own exhibits to report signage that might be in violation of the Executive order.

At Glacier National Park in Montana, mentions of climate change—of course, which is literally melting the very glaciers the park was named after—were erased.

At Yellowstone, which was established on land from which the U.S. military forcibly removed Tribes, any mention of Native Tribes was ordered to be removed.

They are even asking visitors to report any material they find offensive. I find that offensive. Last June, the Trump administration instructed Park Service staff to post QR codes that visitors could scan to report signs they disagreed with.

So far, there has been little clarity on the process and, of course, zero public input. But some brave public servants anonymously uploaded the list of reported violations to a public site. Examples from across the country include the entirety of the Emmett Till exhibit in Alabama; reviewing covers of books on the topic of slavery, including autobiographies; and reviewing content in Junior Ranger books about emancipation, the cause of the Civil War, and freedmen's colonies because they all might be “disparaging of Americans.”

So far, the Department has reviewed more than 2,000 pieces of media and has ordered the removal or alteration of hundreds of signs and exhibits, and we know they aren't done.

So what more could be at risk in the coming days? Well, in New Mexico, we have Park Service signs that share Tewa translations. That is a language that has been spoken in our part of the United States since long before the Colonies were founded. Because this language is a language other than English, these signs are at risk of removal. Other Park Service signs in

New Mexico include Spanish translations, and that should surprise absolutely no one given our history under Spain and Mexico before being ceded to the United States in 1848. In fact, New Mexico's State Constitution recognizes Spanish as a protected language. But because these signs have a language that is not English, under the Trump administration, they risk removal.

Other exhibits at risk are not about language. The Trump administration claims it is removing signs because they "cast a negative light" on American history. But this is our history. Someone just doesn't want our history to be told. That is putting the telling of our history at risk. It is, in fact, already under attack, and that is straight out of the authoritarian playbook. It should anger every single American listening today. When we erase information about who we are, when we silence people's stories, we promote a narrative that ignores and manipulates what truly happened. So let me tell you what they are trying to erase.

It is true that some of our forefathers founded this country on the enslavement of other human beings. It is true that those human beings built much of this country, including the building we are standing in here today. And we fought a civil war and amended our Constitution and guaranteed rights to millions of Americans as the result of all of that because we demanded better of our country and of ourselves.

It is true that some of our forefathers forced Tribal people from their homes, making them walk hundreds of miles on death marches to resettle in small tracts of land far from the land they knew. And today? Today, the daily work of the Senate's Energy and Natural Resources and Indian Affairs Committees is to protect the rights and advance the well-being of some of those same Tribes because we demand better of our Nation and of ourselves.

It is true that this country did not apply the American values of democracy and justice equally in the beginning and that women, Black people, Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans, LGBTQ, and persons with disabilities—just to name a few—all had to struggle to gain the same rights as other groups of people because they demanded better of our Nation and for all of us.

Like the stories of families that traveled over oceans, like mine did, and traveled over mountains to be a part of the American dream, the stories of those fights are the stories of how America became the country that it is and how we will continue to lead. The hardships, the pain, the suffering—they aren't false, and they aren't fictions. They made us stronger, and they don't negate the progress we have made or the pride we take in our country as we continue to strive for a more perfect Union.

Because every good story is rooted in place, I often say that public lands are the anvil on which our collective

American identity was forged because these lands preserve where much of that history happened. From our historical parks and our historic trails to our national parks, monuments, and wilderness areas, these lands hold the echoes of our ancestors. They hold the good and the bad. And knowing the truth makes us better. It makes us stronger. That is what makes us demand more for our country and more for ourselves. New Mexico tells us this.

Take the story of the Manhattan Project in my home State. You know, we now have a national historic park to tell that story, but you can't tell the story of the dawn of the atomic age without telling the whole story, without recognizing the people from our New Mexico communities whose health was sacrificed to build those powerful devices. You can't hold up the amazing scientific advances made under J. Robert Oppenheimer's supervision without also telling the story of his political persecution and the removal of his clearance.

You know, George Orwell predicted a lot of things, and he once wrote:

The most effective way to destroy people is to deny and obliterate their own understanding of their history.

Right now, President Trump is dumbing down our history. He is cheapening our national parks. But he will not take our history from us. We will tell these stories again and again and again as long as it takes and long after he is relegated to the history books.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHMITT). The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, our Nation was founded on extraordinary ideals.

Our Declaration of Independence said:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

Our Constitution starts out with that vision:

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Lofty ideals—the equality of individuals, a nation formed to create tranquility and prosperity, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty. That is an incredible vision.

And our Nation has been on an aspirational journey to realize those visions for 250 years that we are celebrating now, this summer, July 4, 250 years since that Declaration of Independence. But that journey—that journey is a complicated one.

Certainly, when the Declaration of Independence was written, it was not true that all men and women were created and treated equally. They were certainly not treated equally.

We traveled through the journey of discrimination and prejudice of oppression, but we aspired to a better nation. We struggled with the challenges and the shortcomings. So our history, it is marked by extraordinary achievements, but it is also marred by significant failings. All of it is part of our journey, our collective journey, and no one has the right to erase it. Hands off our history.

As the lead Democrat on the Interior spending committee, I know the critical role that our national parks play in telling those stories of our complicated history, and they tell that story to millions of visitors each year. And those visitors go: Wow. So that is what happened, and that is how we responded to it to try to get to a better place or that is what happened, and isn't that something worth celebrating? And let's keep returning to those types of achievements again.

So we are often a bit stunned by knowing our own history, a bit inspired, but all of it creates a better foundation for us to go forward.

Alan Spears of the National Parks Conservation Association said:

As Americans, we deserve national parks that tell stories of our country's triumphs and heartbreaks alike. We can handle the truth.

And, yes, we Americans can handle the truth. There are nations all over the world with authoritarian governments that whitewash their history. But we Americans are better than that. We can handle the truth. We can celebrate the achievements; we can regret the mistakes; and we can move forward to build a better nation.

The Lewis and Clark Expedition began in Missouri and reached all the way to my State of Oregon. It was a triumph of exploration, but America's westward expansion also brought some tragedies: the destruction of Native Tribes, the slaughter of the American bison. And we owe it to our children and the generations to come to tell the entire story. We have faith in their ability to build a foundation of understanding that will support better decision making and a better celebration of our Nation, knowing it is based on the truth, not on some—well, some version, some fictional version of the past.

But President Trump isn't strong enough to handle the history of our Nation. He wants that purged version, that version where all of the kind of missteps are set aside or anything that might trouble the soul about something that happened in the past. Let's not allow Americans to know that. Let's hide it from them. Let's hide it from our children.

What a massive mistake to live in a world where citizens can't face the truth and where a President is terrified of the truth and wants to hide it.

On March 27 of last year, 2025, President Trump signed Executive Order 14253, directing the National Park Service to review and remove what it considers to be "improper ideology."

“Improper” means it doesn’t celebrate our Nation and mentions some of the challenges that we faced along the way.

Following that Executive order, exhibits and information about all kinds of things started getting deleted from our national parks: Tribal history, women’s suffrage, climate science, civil rights, the history of slavery, the history of Jim Crow—removed. The Trump administration is literally whitewashing the history of the United States of America.

Here are just a few examples of materials the Trump administration has purged from our national parks: At Independence National Historical Park in Pennsylvania, an exhibit about enslaved people who lived and worked in George Washington’s home; at Acadia National Park in Maine, factual signs about rising park temperatures; at Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming, information about the massacre of Native Americans; at Muir Woods National Park in California, an exhibit about the role of women in protecting the park.

And not just exhibits but entire sites are in danger, like the Emmett Till and Mamie Till-Mobley National Monument in Mississippi. A Black teenager, 14 years old, accused of looking at or whistling at a White woman—he was beaten. He was mutilated. He was shot in the head, and he was thrown into a river.

Knowing that history makes one understand our Nation better. Pretending that there never was oppressive tactics inflicted on Black Americans steals the opportunity to understand our history and where we are today and what we aspire to.

A park employee warned: “Without this exhibit to share the difficult [Emmett] Till story . . .” the monument “would be almost completely devoid of interpretation. . . . The exhibit emphasizes the ‘progress of the American’ people toward a better future.”

Isn’t that part of the understanding of things that go wrong? It helps us understand how we have moved forward, and that is an important piece because it says that we can move forward, that we have overcome some serious challenges of the past and moved forward; and, therefore, we can do so again in the challenges that we are encountering.

In addition to these exhibits, the Washington Post reports that parks across the country have flagged exhibits that, in an internal government database, include the Arches National Park, the Harpers Ferry National Historic Park, the Cape Hatteras National Seashore, the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail, the Manzanar National Historic Site, even Ford’s Theater National Historic Site, and the Thomas Jefferson Memorial right here in Washington, DC. Trump wants to whitewash all of that history.

Censorship is un-American, and it is damaging to all of us. So on February

24, my colleague from New Mexico—and thank you for launching this series of speeches—demanded answers from Interior Secretary Burgum asking:

How many exhibits has the Department removed or otherwise altered?

You know, in November, when the administration announced that the parks were removing Martin Luther King, Jr., Day and Juneteenth but adding President Trump’s birthday as fee-free holidays, I wrote to Secretary Burgum:

These alarming changes . . . are instead a thinly veiled attempt to use our nation’s most iconic landscapes to further the self-promotion of President Trump.

Neither our national parks nor our national holidays should be about a President trying to glorify himself as if he is a King. We certainly should allow no President to whitewash our history.

In January, Senator MURKOWSKI and I rejected the Trump administration’s proposed fiscal year 2026 spending cuts and, instead, fully funded every single national park.

Let’s understand that erasing history that doesn’t center on those in power is authoritarianism. Erasing science at the request of a President is authoritarianism. Erasing the truth at the request of a President because it upsets him is authoritarianism. And we will not allow this authoritarian President to erase the history of our great Nation.

The Trump administration claims to love America, but you cannot truly love our wonderful Nation unless you understand our national journey, our triumphs, and our shortcomings.

Loving America means embracing our collective effort to learn from our shortcomings, to embrace the collective aspiration to build a better future, to aspire to the noble values we hold dear, the values that were expressed in our very founding documents of our Declaration of Independence and our Constitution, the value that we were created equal and that a great nation is one that provides opportunity for every citizen to thrive and that every citizen can fully enjoy the rights guaranteed in our Constitution: freedom of speech and freedom of assembly and freedom of religion and freedom to participate in shaping our shared future through free and fair elections.

Our national parks help explain that these freedoms don’t exist for everyone in the world, but they exist here because we envisioned the possibility and we secured them. Our Founders secured them for themselves and the generations to come, and we continue to work toward that vision.

The freedoms are precious. We have won the birth lottery to be here as citizens of the United States of America. And it is our responsibility, the responsibility of every generation, to protect and pass on these precious freedoms to the next generation. Let’s start by saying: Hands off our national parks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I would like to begin talking a little bit about history, generally, rather than the topic that has been the subject of the prior remarks, and then get into the question that has been raised today.

There are several clichés about history, and one of the problems with clichés is you hear them so often they lose their meaning, and you just sort of sluff them off. But these two, I think, do have some meaning, and they have become clichés because they are true.

One is, if you ignore history, you are doomed to repeat it. I have been hearing that all my life. If you don’t know your history and if you ignore history, you are doomed to repeat it.

The second is attributed to Mark Twain who said:

History doesn’t always repeat itself, but it [usually] rhymes.

And that means that things that have happened in the past may not be exactly what happens in the future, but the history predicts the future.

I recently finished a biography of Cicero, the great Roman statesman, and he said something about history that really stuck with me, which is: If you don’t know the history of your civilization, you live your whole life as a child.

I thought that was a really important insight because what that is really saying is all you have is your life. Whether you are 50 years old or 40 years old or 25 years old, that is your sum knowledge if you don’t know the history that goes back 5 years, 10 years, 100 years, or 1,000 years.

If you don’t know your history, you live your whole life as a child. And what we are seeing in this process at our national parks is a kind of lie to try to erase history, to try to keep us from understanding the historical events that shaped this country. It is a lie. It is not true.

If our parks and our historical sites are supposed to enrich our lives and tell us about the background and the history of our country, if you leave out the important parts, it is a damn lie, and that is what is happening today.

We have a fantastic history. We have a great history. We have an extraordinary history in his country of triumphs, of achievements. But we also have dark periods of our history, and, indeed, I would argue that one of our great triumphs is overcoming those dark periods in our history.

To try to whitewash and eliminate and cover up the history of slavery is to ignore the first third of our country’s history altogether and the cause of the greatest cataclysm this country has ever faced. And to eliminate, for example, a display on slavery at Harpers Ferry is just flat ridiculous. Harpers Ferry is there because of slavery and because that was where John Brown’s raid was, and that was the issue at that moment.

It is like saying you can’t have a model rocket at Cape Kennedy. I mean, it is just ridiculous to try to make that

kind of change. And the problem is, if we don't know our history—as I go back to my early clichés—we may be doomed to repeat it or some dark version thereof.

The President and the Secretary have talked about not wanting people to be uncomfortable and feel bad about their history. People should feel uncomfortable about slavery. They should understand that that was part of the first third of the history of this country, and they should understand the evils.

One of the most moving experiences I have ever had was when I went on a civil rights pilgrimage, several years ago, to Alabama, and we went to Montgomery. In Montgomery, there is a monument to lynching, and hanging from the ceiling of this building are these—they look like large coffins, frankly, and they have the names on them from virtually every State, all the way up into the 1950s, where people were lynched by mobs.

It was a shock, but it was something that educated me, that made me understand the depth of this issue and how important it was to the early part of the history of this country.

I had an experience that directly informed what I am talking about today. Several years ago, I was on a trip with a group of Members of this body to Europe. I think it was for the NATO conference. And on the way back, we stopped at the Frankfurt airport, and there was a fellow there who worked at the airport who was sort of guiding us through to get to our gate to come home.

I got to chatting with him, and he told me something amazing. He said, when he was in high school in Germany, he was required to go to a concentration camp. He was required to see what his country had done to the Jews and others in that incredibly dark period of German history.

The Germans are requiring their people to face their dark history, and we are trying to cover up our dark history. I just find the contrast extraordinary.

You learn from your history. You learn from the dark periods. And here is a perfect example—the greatest sentence ever written in English:

We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal.

That was written on a desk by a slaveholder, and the desk was built by a slave at Monticello. That is an irony. That is perplexing. That is difficult. It is uncomfortable, but it is part of the reality. It is part of the reality of the history of our country, and it is something we have to conjure with.

When I was a boy growing up, I used to go to a Rotary Club meeting with my father, and the prize for people who came the farthest for the Rotary Club meeting was a copy of George Washington's will, which is a very interesting document because, in his will, he freed his slaves. Again, that is a part of our history, and we need to understand that the people who came before us

went through difficult periods, and they had to face difficult issues.

Whitewashing history, throughout history, is part of the authoritarian playbook to try to manipulate history, to have all glory go to the leader, all glory go to the government, and have people not be uncomfortable about what went on in the past so they won't be uncomfortable in what is being done to them by an authoritarian government.

The glory of our country is the journey to "a more perfect Union." I have always thought, ever since I first read the Constitution in law school, it was very telling that the Framers used the term "more perfect Union." They didn't say "a perfect union" or "toward a union." They saw America as a journey. They saw America as moving through time, by moving through and progressing over time.

When the Constitution was first written, the only people who could vote were White male property owners. Since that time, through tremendous struggle and sometimes violence—ask John Lewis or the early suffragettes that were in prison—that circle of who could vote, of who could participate has gradually grown. And that, to me, is the heart of the American journey, and that is the heart of what we must understand and recognize in order to know our history and not live our entire lives as a child.

What is going on now, I believe, is an affront to the American people. And what it is really saying is that the American people can't handle the truth. Like Jack Nicholson said in the movie, "You can't handle the truth."

The American people can handle the truth. They can understand what happened. They can understand why it was evil and the struggles that took place in order to overcome the dark portions of our history.

It is underestimating our people. They need to understand. We all need to understand from whence we came.

And I will conclude by saying again: The glory of our country is the journey, including the hard parts, toward "a more perfect Union."

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

NATIONAL PARKS

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I thought it was instructive to listen to my colleague from Maine, ANGUS KING. And today, he quoted Cicero in saying: If you don't know your history, you live your whole life as a child.

Well, here is another cliché: Ignorance is bliss.

Ignorance is not bliss, and yet that is what President Trump wants the American people to be in—in a state of ignorance.

Our national parks tell the story of our country—good, bad, past, present, and future. With over 430 national park sites covering more than 85 million acres across our country, the national parks system protects the beauty of

our country and preserves the history that has played out on these sites.

But under the Trump regime, this past year has been a historically destructive period for our national parks. From stripping land protections and gutting park staff to plastering Trump's face on national park passes—frankly, I am just glad I have a lifetime pass that does not have his face on it. From making Trump's birthday a free entrance day, while limiting the free entrance day for Martin Luther King, Jr., Day and Juneteenth, Trump and Republicans have been conducting an unprecedented assault on our national parks.

What is more, they are attempting to rewrite history to their liking. Last May, the Department of Interior advised national park sites across the country to remove content at their sites that "disparage Americans." The Department claimed to have found hundreds of instances of partisan ideology in exhibits at national parks and ordered that they be removed.

What were these exhibits that were so partisan and offensive that they were flagged and ordered for removal? They included an exhibit at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge to display information describing the internment of Japanese Americans in wartime camps—concentration camps—displays describing the massacres of indigenous people, displays depicting the historical accounts of slavery.

Think about that. This regime views historical accounts of massacres, slavery, and internment as partisan ideology so dangerous it warrants removal. The removal of these exhibits not only strips these sites of critical content, but it erases and whitewashes the history of our country.

These exhibits and others like them reflect some of the darkest stains on our country's history. That is precisely why it is so important that we continue to talk about them and learn about them. It is by preserving history that we prevent ourselves from repeating the more egregious parts of our past.

Perhaps that is why Trump is so hell-bent on erasing painful parts of our Nation's history. He wants to wipe out references to the unconstitutional internment of over 120,000 Japanese Americans that destroyed their livelihoods—indeed, their lives—their businesses, and split apart families.

Doesn't this sound familiar, as this regime goes about arresting and deporting thousands of immigrants without due process, spreading fear and chaos in our communities?

Our national parks are places where we can learn about historical events. Our parks also preserve pristine national landscapes in every corner of our country.

Many of these sites are impacted, unsurprisingly, by climate change. Protecting our parks from the impacts of climate change is not a high priority for Trump and his regime, as he continues to focus on "drill baby drill." In

fact, his regime is erasing exhibits addressing the impacts of climate change on our parks.

Information about climate change helps national park visitors to fully understand the environment that surrounds them. The National Park Service has been ordered to remove the general climate change web page, as well as specific changes on other national park websites, including those from the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park site. Talk about sticking your head in the sand.

For Hawaii, our unique geography means it is profoundly impacted by climate change, from shoreline erosion to rising ocean temperatures and so much more.

Americans need to understand what is happening to our environment so that we can better understand how to protect these natural resources for future generations. It is critical that our parks continue not only their missions of conserving natural, cultural, and historical landscapes, but that they accurately display important context about the sites on which they exist.

As this regime—and why do I keep referring to “this regime”? It is because regimes are authoritarian. Authoritarian regimes tell parks: Hey, do not tell the American people the full history of this site.

That is a regime. So that is why I continue to call this a regime.

Anyway, for this regime, as it attempts to rewrite history all over the place, it is no surprise that they have set their sights on our national parks. The millions of visitors to our national parks will not get a full picture. Apparently, that is exactly as this regime intends.

Mr. President, we deserve better.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

H.R. 6644

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleagues to talk about the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act and why it is so important.

I want to start with core principles. Without a safe, decent, affordable, comfortable place to call home, nothing in your life works—not your job, not your family, not your education or your health. That is because a home is more than just four walls and a roof; it is a source of stability and comfort and dignity. It gives you the freedom and the opportunity to build the life that you want.

I think that every Member of this Chamber knows this: Every day, Americans are trying to figure out how to afford their lives, and millions—in big cities and suburbs, in small towns and rural communities—are stretching to pay their rent. And the dream of owning your own home—that American dream—feels like a pipedream to many millions of our constituents. It is hard for working families, and it is hard for young people starting out, to even imagine being able to put the money

together for a downpayment or a mortgage.

So why is this happening? It is interesting. Across political parties and across the country, most people who have looked at this question agree: We have a supply problem in this country. Basically, there are more people who need a place to live than there are houses people can afford to rent or to buy, and then we are losing affordable homes and we aren't building enough homes at prices that people can afford. That is a supply problem. The result is housing costs soaring out of reach.

Over 22 million people in this country are paying more than 30 percent of their income on rent. So what that means is that they don't have enough money for the other necessities in their life, like school or healthcare or hopefully saving a little money. So that is 22 million people who are struggling to hold it together because of the cost of their rent.

Over 12 million people are paying more than 50 percent of their income on rent. For those folks, their life just basically isn't working. They are drowning. They are struggling to pay their bills. They are not paying the bills that they need to.

I can tell you that in Minnesota there are just 41 affordable and available places for people to rent for every 100 people with extremely low incomes. So the rental market is very tight—not enough supply. But the story for people who want to own their own home is also really challenging. Mortgage payments are roughly 40 percent higher than they were in 1990, even after you adjust for inflation. And in the past few years, the median home price has reached \$400,000. As a result, the age of first-time home buyers is now 40 years old in this country.

Now, Archie and I were about 30 when we bought our first home. We were newly married and had a boatload of school debt, but we could afford the mortgage on our first home, which was about \$85,000. Today, that home would cost over \$300,000.

So all of this is why the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act is so important. This is landmark legislation to build more homes, to bring down housing costs, and to rein in corporate landlords. This is the biggest housing supply bill to move through Congress in 30 years. It has remarkably broad bipartisan support in Congress and the support of people across the country who have been working hard on this issue for so many years—from the United States Conference of Mayors to the National Association of REALTORS, the National Low Income Housing Coalition, the National Association of Affordable Housing Lenders, the Enterprise Community Partners. All of these are supporting this legislation.

What this bill does is it boosts housing supply by cutting redtape, by making it easier and cheaper to build good places for people to live, and by preserving the existing supply of very affordable homes in rural communities.

I have been working on this issue since I first came to the Senate. When I first was here, we went around Minnesota, and we organized listening sessions on housing in communities all across the State. I can tell you, I got an earful. People told me that they couldn't find an affordable place to live. Businesses told me that the housing shortage was making it impossible for them to recruit talent into their communities. Mayors were telling me that a lack of housing was hurting their community housing vitality. And developers told me it was too complex and expensive to build new homes.

So as chair of the Housing Subcommittee with Senator MIKE ROUNDS, my wonderful ranking member, we dug into this. We dug into the challenges especially around the Rural Housing Service. Now, the Rural Housing Service has been a vital link in the chain to provide very affordable places for people to live in rural communities. Think of the elders who live on a fixed income who want to stay in the communities where they raised their families or people who are living with disabilities or working poor families.

Most of the properties in the Rural Housing Service were built in the 1960s with the help of Federal mortgages to finance them, and often, they were the only affordable places to call home in rural communities. Today, many of these homes are in disrepair, and the Rural Housing Service is in desperate need of reform and modernization. And if we don't take action, we are at risk of losing 400,000 very affordable places for people to live in rural communities.

So I am so excited to say that our bill has been included in the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act. Here is what it does: It makes some really simple, commonsense reforms. It cuts redtape to make it easier for nonprofits to assume the mortgages of these properties and to fix them up and preserve them for low-income renters to use for years to come. It simplifies the foreclosure process, and that saves the government money and also protects tenants so properties can be transferred more easily. And it gives the Rural Housing Service more capacity to work with local banks on financing by helping them modernize how their computer systems work.

Here is what that looks like in realtime. Last August, I visited Maplewood Apartments in St. Peter, MN, which is a small and wonderful community in southern Minnesota. This apartment complex needed a lot of TLC to be a decent place for people to live. Local nonprofits and public partners joined together to fix it up, and I had a chance to see what that work had resulted in, to see what it meant, particularly to one resident, Lisa Gallegos, who welcomed me into her new home. She told me about what a difference this place made in her life—this apartment—where she finally had the space to be able to focus on her life and making her life work rather than

worrying every single month about how she was going to hold it together, how she was going to pay the rent and pay her other bills. This example is why it is so important that we preserve these rural apartment units and why my bill with MIKE ROUNDS is so important.

Now, none of this happened overnight. MIKE and I held hearings. We put out a request for comment. We had leaders from the USDA and housing advocates from around the country come in and tell us what needed to happen. And we listened, and we went to work. And with the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act, we are going to get it done.

I want to especially thank Senator ROUNDS for being such an excellent partner and friend in this work, and I also want to thank Senators DAINES, WARNER, CRAPO, FETTERMAN, CRAMER, WARNOCK, SHAHEEN, MORAN, CORTEZ MASTO, RICKETTS, KING, RISCH, and HEINRICH, all who joined in this effort as cosponsors.

Overall, the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act takes many important steps to boost supply for housing. It creates the first ever incentives for cities and towns to build more housing. It removes regulatory barriers and helps streamline environmental reviews to speed up affordable housing construction, and it makes it less expensive. It boosts financing options for modular housing and also for manufactured housing and affordable homes. It removes unnecessary requirements for manufactured housing to have the chassis on them—the wheels on them—that are not necessary. This is going to save thousands of dollars.

This bill focuses on increasing housing supply, but it also is ensuring that homes that are built end up in the hands of families and not corporations. In Minnesota, I often hear stories from people who are trying to buy a home and then an anonymous corporate actor swoops in with an all-cash offer and they just can't compete with it. A young couple looking to buy their first home can't compete with an all-cash offer from a hedge fund.

Out-of-State landlords have also gobbled up homes, turning them into rentals, leaving these properties in disrepair, leaving tenants in the lurch, and jacking up the rent all at the same time. One of the worst actors in Minnesota bought up more than 600 homes and then failed to meet even the most basic expectations as a landlord. The city of Minneapolis found code violations at 58 percent of their properties, with tenants reporting long periods of not having any hot water or a working furnace or having bats in their place or literally having to use buckets of water to get the toilets to flush. The Minnesota attorney general Keith Ellison filed a lawsuit against the firm and settled for more than \$4 million.

Now, this firm in Minneapolis isn't alone, and it is not just happening in Minnesota. Many of us in this Chamber

have worked for years to hold corporate investors accountable and to stop the American dream of home ownership from being bought up by private equity. So I am so glad that language addressing the role of institutional investors in home ownership is included in this package because homes should be for people, not for corporations.

The 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act does a lot of good. There is going to be more work to do to make it possible for every American to have a safe, decent place to live, but this bill is an important start. I have spent almost 9 years in the Senate, working with anyone who wants to work with me, to improve the capacity of Americans to afford a decent, affordable place to live. So I am proud to support this legislation, and I am very proud that the Rural Housing Service Reform Act is an important part of this bipartisan bill.

I want to particularly thank Senator SCOTT and Senator WARREN and their staff for their creativity and diligence and optimism to put this bill together at a time when Congress needs more bipartisan work. And I also want to thank my partners on the Housing Subcommittee: Senator ROUNDS, Senator LUMMIS, and now Senator BRITT, who is the chair of the subcommittee. Each of you have been serious about working together to tackle problems and to find solutions and to put aside the partisanship that too often defines our work.

Passing the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act will help people afford a decent place to live, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

I yield the floor.

(Mr. LEE assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHMITT). The Senator from Utah.

REMEMBERING REX EDWIN LEE

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, 30 years ago today, my late father Rex Edwin Lee passed away after a nearly decade-long heroic fight with cancer.

Now, 30 years is a long time. Children grow up, so do grandchildren. Families expand, chapters open and close, and yet there are some people whose absences are always felt because the influence of their lives continues to shape those around them long after they have left us.

My dad, pictured here, was one of those people. He certainly was for me and I know for many others.

During his lifetime, he held many offices, received many honors. He was, by any measure, a giant in the legal world. To me, he was, first and foremost, my dad.

To my mother, he was the love of her life and the man with whom she built a family—a family of seven children, a family with evermore grandchildren and now great-grandchildren in their line of succession.

To his seven children, he was a source of energy, of steadiness, humor, discipline, fun, and love.

To his students, he was the kind of teacher who challenged views and in-

spired a love of the craft that was undeniably contagious.

To so many others, he was proof that brilliance and kindness need not be mutually exclusive, that a man could be formidable without being harsh, intensely accomplished without being self-important, and deeply faithful without being pious.

He grew up in a small town, St. Johns, AZ, a really small town that remained part of him throughout the rest of his life. He used to joke that he may have been 18 years old before he realized that the name of the town was not “resume speed ahead.”

St. Johns was a sleepy little community, but it was home to him and so many he loved.

He was grateful for his roots and didn't carry himself like a man embarrassed by his smalltown beginnings. Gratitude was one of the great governing themes of his entire lifetime. He loved that the parable of the 10 lepers referred to the fact that only 1 returned to Jesus to thank him. He described this as this establishing what he called “a human gratitude index.”

Gratitude, he would say, is, too often, far too rare, and it is one of the most uncelebrated but valuable virtues a human being can learn to possess.

However accomplished he became, he seemed to always be aware that life had given him much and that he owed much in return. Even as a young man, there were signs of what he might one day become.

He had a precocious love of language, argument, ideas, and persuasion. He attended Brigham Young University initially. I might add, when he first got there, he went there with a little bit less enthusiasm for that institution than he would later develop.

He had his eye elsewhere. In his small town of St. Johns, AZ, he had a couple of cousins, his first cousins whom he looked up to: Morris and Stewart Udall, just a few years older than he. They were the sons of his father's sister.

They had both gone to study at the University of Arizona. He wanted to follow in their footsteps, but his parents insisted that he spend at least 1 year first at Brigham Young University in my hometown of Provo, UT, but he took an almost instant liking to BYU.

When he got there, he was quickly elected as his freshman class president, and he noted how interesting this was to him that he was elected class president. His freshman class at BYU was several times larger than the entire population in the town he had been raised.

He flourished in every way at BYU. He was, just before he served his senior year, elected to student body president, an early sign of the leadership that would later bring him back to BYU, first, to build its law school and, ultimately, to serve as the university president.

Right in the middle of his undergraduate years, he left to serve a mission for 2½ years where he went to

Mexico serving as a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. That experience strengthened his faith, and it gave him an enduring love for the Spanish language, of the Mexican people, and the rich cultural heritage that comes with it.

He became fluent in the Spanish language and really understood features of the culture that stayed with him for the rest of his life in a way that many around him found remarkable.

Many years later, when I myself became a missionary, he and I developed a practice of writing letters to each other in Spanish, and I was often astonished, particularly during my first few months of my missionary experience, at his degree of proficiency in the Spanish language. I quickly learned to keep a dictionary close by because he was routinely using words that I had yet to learn.

I frequently have interacted with people, people who were born and raised in Mexico, who often described his proficiency in the Spanish language in a way that suggested to them, if they closed their eyes, couldn't see that they were talking to a gringo, you would think they were speaking to another person who had been born and raised in that country.

It was, by the way, during his time in Mexico as a missionary that he first laid eyes on and crossed paths with the woman who would become his wife and eventually my mother. Of all the victories he achieved in his distinguished career, he would have been the first to say that one stands above the rest, that is persuading my mother Janet Griffin to marry him.

By the time my dad reached the University of Chicago Law School, it had certainly become clear that his gifts were rather extraordinary. He ended up graduating first in his class from that institution, and from there went directly to serve a clerkship with Associate Justice Byron White, who was then a fairly new member of the Supreme Court of the United States.

After his clerkship, he returned to Arizona, and he worked for one of Phoenix's premier law firms, Jennings Strouss & Salmon, where he later became a partner.

In 1972, while I was just a baby, he received a phone call. Having received another phone call from someone in Salt Lake City a few weeks earlier, he had been told that the church was thinking about establishing a law school at Brigham Young University.

They asked him as a Latter-day Saint lawyer what he would think of that.

He said: I think that would be a big mistake.

Why?

Well, Utah—a relatively small State—it already has a perfectly good law school at the University of Utah. We don't need another one.

A few months went by, another call came, and said: You know about that law school that we talked about starting, the one you told us not to start?

Yeah.

Well, we are going to start it anyway. We want you to help us figure out whom to hire to run it. Could you help us find a dean?

He said: Sure. I will come up with a list of potential candidates—knowing that the church probably wanted a Latter-day Saint who had been a faculty member at an accredited law school, and he came up with a good list of them.

When that conversation occurred, he thought his job was done. A few months after that, he got a call from Salt Lake City informing him he would be the founding dean of the yet-to-exist, yet-to-be-accredited, yet-to-have-an-entering-class, any-student-body, or any-faculty law school in Provo, UT.

It was, at that point, that my family moved from Arizona to Utah when I was a year old.

Again, there was no faculty. There was no building. There was no library. There were no students. He had to recruit all of this in just a few years' time, starting from scratch, not only without ABA accreditation but without any real promise that ABA accreditation would come.

Later in life, I realized how difficult this must have been. This is the first class, the charter class. It began in the fall of 1973.

I asked him: How on Earth did you do that?

He said: I just looked for really smart undergraduate students. I would find them. I knew where to look, and I would have conversations with them in which I did a heck of a sales job, and I promised them it would be a good experience.

Looking back on that now, I am not sure how I would have responded, but I do know that the charter class of BYU's law school went on to accomplish all sorts of things. They punched way above their weight. The school was accredited long before that charter class graduated.

My dad approached that job with his characteristic determination, and under his leadership, the J. Reuben Clark Law School at BYU began to take shape.

In 1975, a couple of years into that experiment, he took a leave of absence from the law school and went to Washington, DC, to become the Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Civil Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. Having been invited to assume that role by Ed Levi, who served as the Attorney General of the United States under President Ford.

He would return back to the BYU Law School 2 years later to continue serving as dean.

He enjoyed that experience very much, and a few years later in 1981, he received another phone call and was invited to return to Washington to serve as Solicitor General of the United States under President Reagan. In that capacity, it was his job to represent

the U.S. Government before the Supreme Court. He argued many dozens of cases during one of the most demanding and interesting periods of time in the Supreme Court's history. During his time as Solicitor General, he won 23 of the 30 cases he argued during that roughly 4-year period, during President Reagan's first Presidential term.

He held records both as the Solicitor General of the United States and later as an attorney in private practice before the Supreme Court for arguing more cases before the Supreme Court in a single term than anyone had in the Court's history at that point.

In 1986, he returned again to the faculty at BYU as a professor while working simultaneously as a partner at Sidley Austin, one of the Nation's finest law firms, where he helped found the flagship Supreme Court practice at that firm. From that point forward, much of his legal practice consisted of arguing cases specifically before the Supreme Court. For a lawyer, there are few greater privileges.

As a child, I learned something interesting. I learned that anytime I wanted to attend one of my dad's arguments, it was a very effective way of missing school. I had an almost perfect track record of this. I figured out what his argument schedule was, and when I saw it approaching, I knew that if I pled my case correctly, I could go and watch. More about that in just a minute.

Right before he died, he was still rehearsing in his mind, still preparing to argue what would have been his 60th case before the Supreme Court despite being confined to a hospital bed.

A lot of my own early exposure to the law came from watching him in court, often just as an excuse to miss school. I discovered to my delight that if I asked, they would usually let me go, and I would sit there in court as a young boy trying to take in the majesty of the place, listening to language I didn't fully understand and yet understanding just enough to know that what my dad was doing was important.

Over time, I learned to decode some of the language—not all of it by any means, but I started to play games. I could figure out which Justice was going to ask a question next, how the Court might respond to certain arguments. I even picked up subtleties of mistakes lawyers would commonly make that would usually make the Justices not respond well.

All of my siblings attended my dad's arguments from time to time, and for whatever reason, the law bug seemed to have bitten two of his seven children more than others. My brother Tom and I both became lawyers, entering our dad's profession.

As fate would have it, many years later, Tom and I, after entering the practice of law and having served in various capacities—law firms, government service—Tom later became a law professor at BYU's Law School. But back in 2010, within a 24-hour period, we both experienced different turns to

our careers. On one night in 2010, I won the Utah Republican primary in my first Senate race. The very next morning after winning that primary, my brother was confirmed by the Utah State Senate as a member of Utah's Supreme Court—a post he held for 12 years.

There were many influences in our lives, of course, but no one can seriously doubt the source of so much of that inspiration. We were raised by a father who loved the law with all of his mind and loved God and his family with all of his heart. Our father's faith was central to his life. He was a devout Latter-day Saint, and he taught all seven of us—my brother and I and our five sisters—he taught us how to pray, to read the Scriptures, to trust in the Lord, to serve and love others.

He served in many callings, many positions in the lay ministry in our church. He had a profound belief in religious liberty, and he thought carefully about why it mattered. He understood the structure of the Constitution. He understood the historical development of religious liberty. He understood the arguments of Jefferson and Madison and the distinction between the establishment clause and the free exercise clause and how they intersect and the jurisprudence that had grown up around those important guarantees.

But he also understood that for millions of Americans and so many billions around the world, religion is itself a covenant and a duty and a blessing. He understood that a free people cannot remain free if they are denied the right to live out the deepest obligations of the soul. He believed that. He defended that. He lived that.

At home, for all of his stature, he was never remote. Sometimes he had to go out of town, other times he might have to work long days at the office, but he always came home without too much time elapsing, and he was ever present when home. In fact, one of the wonders of my late father was that taking into account all he did, I don't think any one of us ever felt neglected, despite how many obligations he had.

When I was a boy, I decided to make some money by shoveling the neighbors' driveways after heavy snowstorms. I very quickly found myself during certain winter months with more work, more jobs than I could easily handle within a finite period of time. My clients, after all, demanded that their driveways be shoveled, and I didn't want to let them down.

My father offered to help me. I offered to pay him. He declined. I remember—I think his exact words were: Consider me your indentured servant. You don't have to pay me, but you can collect the money attributable to my labors on your behalf. Consider it my service to you.

So there I was, a boy with a small snow-shoveling enterprise, collecting the proceeds, while my father, one of the finest lawyers in America, worked

beside me in the cold, helping his son keep commitments. He was still much bigger than I was and able to shovel a lot more snow than I was. He was there for me.

Another family story that captures something essential about my dad is a story I have always loved, a story that I have gotten from my brother Tom. Tom is a few years older than I am. When I was either very little or perhaps not yet born, my dad one day was assembling a swing set in our backyard in Arizona. He was using some specialized tool that had come with the swing set, specific to that set.

My brother Tom kept asking what that tool was called. My dad looked at it, a little confused at first, and then said: Look, I don't know what it is called, but when you need one of those, nothing else will do.

The same, as my brother has often observed, could be said of my dad. He was so many things at once, and he did so many things at once—scholar, advocate, teacher, administrator, church member, husband, father, mentor, friend, patriot, and that list could continue on for some time. It is hard to reduce him to one word or even one set of words, but when you needed a person of exactly his unique combination of gifts and talents and interests, nothing else would do.

He had a genuine warmth and a mischievous side to him. He loved amusement parks and roller coasters and wasn't too dignified to shout both on the way up and on the way down on the roller coaster, especially if some of his teenage children were there, capable of being perfectly embarrassed by that spectacle of a grown man shouting at the top of his lungs.

In 1987, while he was still in outstanding physical condition—an avid runner, a marathoner—he was diagnosed with a very aggressive, advanced form of stage IV non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. It was a devastating cancer diagnosis. He was told by many of the doctors that he may not live more than a few months. Yet what followed from that moment was one of the most instructive chapters of his life.

He fought for months and nearly died during that initial period following his initial diagnosis, and then, through excellent medical care and what felt to us like a providential chain of events tantamount to miracles, he was granted more time, nearly 9 more years.

What did he do with those 9 years? Well, he didn't retreat into bitterness or caution. He didn't allow pain to become the dominant feature in his life, or the fear of subsequent deterioration of his health. He returned to work. He continued to serve in the church as the bishop of our local church congregation in Provo. He continued to teach as a professor at BYU while maintaining a full-time law practice. He continued to argue cases before the Supreme Court—something he loved, once commenting that is the most fun one can have in any activity that doesn't involve eat-

ing ice cream. He continued to be a father, a grandfather, a mentor. And he did so all without any complaint.

Just about 2 years after that initial diagnosis, which fortunately turned into remission, he was asked to serve as the 10th president of Brigham Young University—a position he had neither sought nor anticipated, but he did it willingly, gladly, grateful for the opportunity to serve.

He served with ambition and with purpose. During his presidency, among other things, he established an academic freedom policy and launched the university's first, ambitious capital campaign. He told me that when he designed this campaign to create BYU's first endowment, he intended to raise \$250 million. They thought he had lost his mind. They thought they would never get that done. Well, it happened a few years later. They finished it under his successor, president Merrill Bateman, and his vision helped launch that.

At the time, BYU didn't have an endowment, but it began the work of building one. He laid the groundwork that made that possible, and it came to fruition just a few years after he died. Today, that endowment stands valued in the billions of dollars—a lasting part of his legacy.

He was proud to help bring about massive expansion of buildings on campus. He was thrilled with the opening of the BYU Museum of Art—another enduring contribution to his service as president of the university.

Yet even those achievements are dwarfed by the less tangible part of his presidency. He created a culture on campus in which people felt they belonged. Students felt seen. Faculty felt and, in fact, were heard. There was a sense of shared purpose on campus, and much of that came from his ability to build genuine rapport with all of those around him. That spirit became one of the defining features of his time as president.

I remember talking with one of his law partners after he had died—Carter Phillips, a longtime partner at Sidley Austin and a dear friend and colleague of my dad's. He said: Walking across BYU's campus with Rex Lee serving as president was unlike any experience I could ever imagine on any other college campus in America—a combination of walking across the campus with someone who is at once royalty, a rock star, a sports star, and everybody's buddy, and also just a revered academic figure.

He said: I have never seen anything like it. But people liked him, and they greeted him with a smile.

In March of 1990, less than a year after he had been installed as BYU's 10th president, cancer came calling again, and that cancer diagnosis was a troubling one. I remember when he informed me one morning in March of 1990 that they had rediscovered cancer. It was a slightly different form of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

He said: This one is more aggressive, less amenable to treatment. This one will take my life. It is just a question of how long, but we think we can stretch out my lifespan by a number of years through aggressive treatment—which he continued to receive almost entirely during the time he continued to serve as BYU president while continuing to still argue Supreme Court cases every single year. That was part of the deal he made with the university. He would do that if they would let him keep his hobby of arguing one or two cases before the U.S. Supreme Court a year. They relented.

Fast-forward a few years to the winter of 1996, the early months of 1996, late February. I remember taking him to the hospital for what would be his last hospital visit a couple weeks before he died. He had an oxygen mask over him helping him breathe. He was mostly unconscious. But as a second-year law student, I understood the words that he was muttering under the mask, and I associated them with one of the cases he had been briefing and was hoping to argue before the U.S. Supreme Court—what would have been his 60th argument.

He was almost unconscious as we were wheeling him in and yet still he managed to continue that fight. He was, even in those fading hours, still preparing in his mind for what he believed would be his next argument before the Supreme Court. That was my dad to the very end—he was ready to make the case.

I will never forget the moment I experienced it—exactly 30 years ago today—as a young law student, right in the middle of my second year of law school. When that day arrived, we knew something was afoot. I had to go back to law school for a few hours for a class. We knew he would likely not survive that day.

Early in the morning, I was at the law school already, preparing for class. I looked out the window, and I saw the Sun rising over the Wasatch Mountains, over the Y Mountain, and Squaw Peak Mountain, which was close to our home and close to the law school. I realized that day that the Sun was rising over those mountains for the last time that he would inhabit this Earth. I knew that the world would be a sadder place without him.

Just a few hours later, I went to class, and I went down to his hospital room in the intensive care unit, where all seven of his children and my mother surrounded him. I called Sharon, my wife, just before I went down there, realizing that things were about to change. She was at home with our two 1-year-old twin boys, James and John, and cried for herself and for me and the rest of my family as I told her we were about to lose him.

As the end drew near, we could tell by his vital signs that it was happening. I kept looking at him, thinking: I wish I could download everything that he has got in there. I need this

knowledge—this vast reservoir of the law, of human relations, of how to be a good follower of Jesus, of how to be a good neighbor and friend. I want to download all of it.

I knew that was in vain. We don't have the technology to do that. We didn't 30 years ago, and we still don't. But I knew I needed to learn everything about him and that I had an abundant supply of things that he left behind in his writings, in his speeches, and in his interactions with people with whom I interacted on a regular basis.

As I reflect back on these 30 years without him since he has been gone and how fully his influence remains, I hear him still, and I still hear a lot of the advice that he gave me: Use the simple word if it will do. Never use a 3-dollar word if a 10-cent word will suffice and get the idea across. Be kind. Give others the benefit of the doubt. When you have won your case, sit down, and don't say another word. Do not spoil a good argument by saying one word too many. And for the love of all that is sacred and holy, when asked by a judge in a courtroom a question—even the most remote, hypothetical—answer the question. Don't try to dodge it. You will regret it.

The older I get, the more grateful I am for these and so many other valuable words of advice I got from him—grateful not only that he was admired but that he was admirable; grateful not only that he was brilliant but that he was good and kind; grateful that his ambitions were elevated by faith; grateful that his public life never consumed his private duties and never eclipsed, in any way, anything else that he had to do.

If he were here, I would tell him that we still miss him, that we still love him, that his example lives on and still instructs us, that his faith still steadies us, that his gratitude still shames our own occasional forgetfulness, our own departure, or our own falling into the trap of what he called the human gratitude index; that the things he built, both in institutions and in people, continue to endure.

Most of all, I would thank him. Thirty years later, I still feel now what I felt then.

I miss you, Dad. I love you, and I thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, first, I am grateful to be on the floor to hear those moving words about Senator LEE's father—an exceptional man. I thank him for sharing those stories with his colleagues.

IRAN

Mr. President, I am on the floor today to talk about the growing, alarming incoherence of the President's war in Iran—an illegal war, a war that he has not sought consent for, a war with an ever-changing rationale and war plan, a war that is costing taxpayers billions of dollars but also cost-

ing them at home in their communities, as energy prices continue to soar.

Let me start with the bombing of this girls' elementary school in Iran. I start here because it shows, in this one horrible incident, the insanity and the destined failure of the President's strategy in Iran and the extraordinary ways in which President Trump is lying to the American people about this war.

Trump has, apparently, learned nothing from our nightmares in Iraq and Afghanistan. You cannot bomb a nation into submission. You cannot impose regime change from the air.

What will happen now that an entire nation is looking at images of America murdering little girls at an elementary school? Yes, this was a mistake—no doubt about it. Mistakes happen in war. But these inevitable mistakes are the reason these bombing campaigns almost never, ever achieve their objectives. All these bombing campaigns do—with the thousands of civilians who, in the end, they kill—is to harden the nation that you are bombing and invading, causing them to take a harder line, to choose harder line leaders—more militant leadership—in order to protect the nation against the enemy invaders who bomb elementary schools.

What makes this incident even more unforgivable is that the President is lying to us. Earlier today, when asked about growing evidence that it was, in fact, a U.S. Tomahawk missile that hit this school, he said:

I don't know about that.

Earlier in the week, when he was asked about the bombing of the girls' school, he said:

Well, I haven't seen it.

He went on to say that the Tomahawk, which is one of the most powerful weapons around—you know, it is sold and used by other countries, whether it is Iran that has some Tomahawks and wishes they had more or—whether it is Iran or somebody else, the Tomahawk is very generic. The President of the United States knows that Iran doesn't have Tomahawks. The President of the United States should know that we are the only nation using Tomahawks. The idea that he is pretending to not know about the bombing of this school—the idea that he is trying to pretend that the Iranians somehow stole a Tomahawk missile from the United States, figured out how to launch it, and aimed it at a school—is absurd and offensive.

Further, this administration refuses to be straight with us about the reasons that we are at war. What he has said is that he wants unconditional surrender and that he wants to be involved in the appointment of the next Supreme Leader. That is regime change—unconditional surrender and the President of the United States choosing the next leader of Iran. But as we have learned in closed-door briefings, that is not actually the Department of Defense's plan. That is not a

goal of the war. We are, in fact, apparently, very satisfied to leave in charge of Iran hardline leadership. The new Supreme Leader is, by most estimates, more radical and likely going to be more provocative and more anti-American than the Supreme Leader whom we killed.

The President told the Iranian people to rush out onto the street. "Take over your government." But he is prepared—his war plan is prepared—to leave in charge of Iran hardline leadership.

Let's be clear. The President is not prepared to come to the defense of the Iranian people if they rise up in the streets. There is nothing in the war plan that suggests we will do that.

The President has also said, over and over and over again, that a goal of the war is to permanently deny Iran the ability to have nuclear weapons. You have heard the President say this. That was in a Department of War press release just days ago.

In our closed-door briefings, we learned that that is, in fact, not a goal of our war plan—that it is not a goal of the war to destroy their nuclear program—which is, of course, not surprising because you cannot destroy Iran's nuclear program from the air. You cannot, A, destroy knowledge. You cannot hunt down with missiles every single Iranian scientist who knows how to build a nuclear reactor. And the materiel is buried so far under the ground to be immune from an air campaign.

So, yes, it stands to reason that one of the goals of this war is not to destroy the nuclear program. But then, why are the President and the Department of Defense telling us that the point of the war is to destroy their nuclear program?

They are not telling the truth about this girls' school that was hit on the first day, and they are not telling the truth about the aims of the war. As we learn more in our closed-door briefings, we learn how unbelievably unprepared they were for the fallout. It is bad enough that they are not telling the truth about why we are at war, but it is incomprehensible that they did not do the basic planning to manage the fallout.

They have no plan to open up the Strait of Hormuz—a totally foreseeable result of a military action against Iran, a completely foreseeable result of murdering the Shia's top religious leader in the middle of the holy month. The strait has now been closed for, effectively, 10 days. There is no plan to reopen it. It is getting worse, not better.

As news broke today that Iran is now, for the first time, mining the strait—and we can't get into this conversation on the floor of the Senate—we all know that, once that mining begins, it is very hard, if not impossible in the short run, to counteract. If the strait is closed for weeks more or months more, that is a global economic catastrophe. Already, my constituents

are paying through the nose for this war. It gets infinitely worse if that strait doesn't open up, and the administration has no plan to open it up.

The incompetence and the lying should infuriate every Member of the Senate and every citizen of this country. This war is costing us at least \$2 billion a day. There are no achievable war aims. The goals shift from day to day. There is no plan to manage the consequences and the fallout for American citizens or citizens of the Gulf.

You saw stories today of additional new missiles raining down on our Gulf allies. You probably know that they—much faster than we—are running out of the interceptors that stop those missiles. There will be increased deaths in the region very soon because we did not have the adequate supplies ready for our allies in the region to protect themselves against an onslaught of Iranian aerial attacks. It is just incompetence—incompetence—made worse by mistruths and made worse by the President's lying to the American people about what is happening and what the goals are of the war.

At the very least, we need to have Secretary Rubio and Secretary Hegseth in front of the Senate. I can't believe that my Republican colleagues don't feel like it is a giant middle finger from the administration that there hasn't been a single hearing on the most significant military action that this country has undertaken in a generation.

What is the point of being a U.S. Senator? Why are we here? Why have we worked so hard to get this job if we are not prepared to ask the administration to come and present to us why they are putting our constituents' lives at risk and why they are driving up the costs at home for our constituents as this war continues to exacerbate rising prices?

We are abdicating our responsibility as Senators. No, let me put it more specifically. Republican leadership and Senators are abdicating their responsibility as Senators—because they run the place—by refusing to demand that the administration come and testify in public.

All we have had are closed-door briefings. There is a limited amount of what we learn behind those doors that we can talk about. Increasingly, it is pretty obvious why the administration will not talk publicly about the Iran war, why they will not come and answer questions before the U.S. Congress—because they have no plan that is achievable. They have a rationale for this war that is shifting by the hour, and they have no plan—no way—to protect the American people from the consequences of their incoherence.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

WAIVING QUORUM CALL

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum call in relation to Calendar No. 343, H.R. 6644.

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

MOTION TO TABLE AMENDMENT NO. 4311

Mr. BARRASSO. I move to table Senate amendment No. 4311.

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

MOTION TO TABLE AMENDMENT NO. 4310

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I move to table Senate amendment No. 4310.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—AMENDMENT NO. 4307

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to vitiate the yeas and nays on Senate amendment No. 4307.

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

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 4307

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on Senate amendment No. 4307.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There being no further debate, the question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment No. 4307 was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 4308

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on substitute amendment No. 4308.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on adoption of the substitute amendment.

Mr. BARRASSO. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. JUSTICE), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. MORENO), and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from Ohio (Mr. MORENO) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGRO) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 84, nays 10, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 51 Leg.]

YEAS—84

Alsobrooks	Cornyn	Grassley
Baldwin	Cortez Masto	Hagerty
Banks	Cotton	Hassan
Barrasso	Cramer	Hawley
Bennet	Crapo	Heinrich
Blumenthal	Curtis	Hickenlooper
Blunt Rochester	Daines	Hirono
Boozman	Duckworth	Hoeven
Britt	Durbin	Husted
Cantwell	Ernst	Hyde-Smith
Capito	Fetterman	Kaine
Cassidy	Fischer	Kelly
Collins	Gillibrand	Kennedy
Coons	Graham	Kim

King	Murphy	Scott (SC)
Klobuchar	Murray	Shaheen
Lankford	Ossoff	Sheehy
Lujan	Padilla	Slotkin
Lummis	Peters	Smith
Markey	Reed	Sullivan
Marshall	Ricketts	Thune
McConnell	Risch	Van Hollen
McCormick	Rosen	Warner
Merkley	Rounds	Warnock
Moody	Sanders	Warren
Moran	Schiff	Welch
Mullin	Schmitt	Whitehouse
Murkowski	Schumer	Wyden

[Rollcall Vote No. 52 Leg.]

YEAS—82

Aisbrooks	Grassley	Murray
Baldwin	Hagerty	Ossoff
Banks	Hassan	Padilla
Barrasso	Hawley	Peters
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Ricketts
Blunt Rochester	Hirono	Risch
Boozman	Hoeben	Rosen
Britt	Husted	Rounds
Cantwell	Hyde-Smith	Sanders
Capito	Kaine	Schiff
Cassidy	Kelly	Schmitt
Collins	Kennedy	Schumer
Coons	Kim	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	King	Sheehy
Cortez Masto	Klobuchar	Slotkin
Cotton	Lankford	Smith
Cramer	Lujan	Sullivan
Crapo	Lummis	Thune
Curtis	Markey	Van Hollen
Daines	Marshall	Warner
Duckworth	McConnell	Warnock
Durbin	McCormick	Warren
Ernst	Merkley	Welch
Fetterman	Moody	Whitehouse
Fischer	Moran	Wyden
Gillibrand	Mullin	
Graham	Murphy	

NAYS—10

Budd	Paul	Wicker
Cruz	Schatz	Young
Johnson	Scott (FL)	
Lee	Tillis	

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Booker

NOT VOTING—5

Blackburn	Justice	Tuberville
Gallego	Moreno	

The amendment (No. 4308), in the nature of a substitute, was agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CAPITO). Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Calendar No. 343, H.R. 6644, a bill to increase the supply of housing in America, and for other purposes.

John Thune, Mike Crapo, Jim Justice, Lindsey Graham, Eric Schmitt, Chuck Grassley, Roger F. Wicker, Mike Rounds, John Barrasso, Roger Marshall, Tim Sheehy, Markwayne Mullin, Tim Scott of South Carolina, Jim Banks, Joni Ernst, Pete Ricketts, John R. Curtis.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call under rule XXII has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on H.R. 6644, a bill to increase the supply of housing in America, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. JUSTICE), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. MORENO), and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from Ohio (Mr. MORENO) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGO) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 82, nays 11, as follows:

NAYS—11

Budd	Murkowski	Tillis
Cruz	Paul	Wicker
Johnson	Schatz	Young
Lee	Scott (FL)	

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Booker

NOT VOTING—6

Blackburn	Justice	Shaheen
Gallego	Moreno	Tuberville

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BARRASSO). On this vote, the yeas are 82, the nays are 11, and one Senator responded "present."

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

SAVE AMERICA ACT

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I would like to speak to the SAVE America Act.

The United States was founded on the principle that the right to vote is sacred and that protecting it is our sacred responsibility.

I am going to read a quote from the Boston Gazette, published on April 16, 1781. This is Samuel Adams' writing 245 years ago:

Let each citizen remember at the moment he is offering his vote . . . that he is executing one of the most solemn trusts in human society for which he is accountable to God and his country.

I often find that principles described in history become more relevant with time, and today, as this Congress debates whether proof of citizenship should be required to vote in Federal elections, those words from 1781 speak clearly to us now.

When you ask the American people about this, there isn't much debate. I had two telephone townhall meetings this afternoon—one in north Louisiana, one in south. I asked: Press 1 if you support the SAVE Act. Press 2 if you don't and 3 if you are undecided.

In both cases, with Democrats, Republicans, and Independents, 83 percent

supported the SAVE Act. It turns out, nationwide, that is also what the American people say regardless of their party: 71 percent of Democrats and 95 percent of Republicans. That is why I am a proud cosponsor of the SAVE America Act—that is, the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility Act.

By the way, in my State of Louisiana, we already have to show an ID to vote, and we participate. It isn't like this is an obstacle to voting—no. This is actually something that people adjust to, and there is no problem. Why? We are used to it. When the Presiding Officer and I get on an airplane to fly to Washington to do the people's business, we have to show an ID of some sort. I know that when people go to political conventions, they have to show an ID to get their credentials to nominate the person running for President. It seems like it is reasonable to say that if you need an ID to get a credential at a convention in order to nominate someone to be President, we could ask people to show an ID to vote for that President.

Now, when you hear that Senate Democrats refuse to support the SAVE America Act, you kind of scratch your head. Again, we use an ID for so many other things. Why shouldn't we have an ID to choose the leader who is going to steer the future of the United States? There is something kind of odd about that, especially when the American people are speaking so clearly.

As far as the talking filibuster is concerned, I have supported returning to the talking filibuster since I joined the Senate in 2015. Let's see the proposal. Let us look at it. We can debate the proposal and then get it done. It is common sense, and it is overwhelmingly supported by the American people. Only 1 percent say they are undecided.

My Senate Democrats know that most of the constituents are for verifying citizenship to vote. They are ignoring the will of the people they represent. I can only assume it is to appease a small, leftwing base—the 16 percent of the people who are against it.

This does not prevent an eligible American from casting a ballot. It doesn't take away anyone's constitutional right. It simply strengthens trust in our system by ensuring that only citizens participate in Federal elections, which is as our Founding Fathers intended. Our constitutional Republic was founded on the principle that every lawful vote should count and that no unlawful vote should dilute the voices of the American citizens.

The SAVE America Act is simple, reasonable, and widely supported. When it comes to the Senate floor next week for a vote, I ask my Senate Democratic colleagues to remember this: You command an ID to buy a gun, which is one constitutional right, but you won't require it to cast a vote, which is another constitutional right. Listen to the people. Pass the SAVE America Act.

With that, I move on to other business.

MORNING BUSINESS

HONORING SERGEANT DECLAN COADY

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, Iowa and our Nation mourn the loss of SGT Declan Coady. A native of West Des Moines, IA, Sergeant Coady served his Nation honorably. He represented the best of us, and I am incredibly thankful for his brave and selfless dedication to defending our freedoms and keeping our homeland safe.

On March 1, 2026, Sergeant Coady was tragically killed in an Iranian drone strike on an American tactical operations center in Kuwait's Port of Shuaiba, alongside five other servicemembers assigned to the 103rd Sustainment Command. Sergeant Coady, just 20 years old, was a sophomore at Drake University. He joined the U.S. Army Reserves upon graduating from high school in 2023 and served as an information technology specialist. Enrolled in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps Program, he could have been exempt from deployment, but loved serving his country so much that he chose to deploy to Kuwait this past August anyway. Through his commitment to our country, Sergeant Coady earned several awards and decorations, including the Army Service Ribbon, National Defense Service Ribbon, and Overseas Service Ribbon.

Sergeant Coady is survived by his sister, two brothers, and father. He was an Eagle Scout, an avid outdoorsman, and an athlete. He cared deeply about his family, who will remember him for his kindness and intelligence. He was a superb student studying cyber security at Drake, with an incredibly bright future ahead of him.

Sergeant Coady made the courageous choice to serve his country and paid the ultimate sacrifice. His invaluable service will not be forgotten. I, along with the entire country, extend my deepest gratitude to Sergeant Coady, and my deepest condolences to his family and friends.

HONORING CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 3 ROBERT M. MARZAN

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, today, we remember CW3 Robert Marzan, a longtime resident of Des Moines, IA. While his sacrifice can never be repaid, his courageous service will never be forgotten.

On March 1, 2026, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Marzan was killed in an Iranian drone strike on an American tactical operations center in Kuwait's Port of Shuaiba, alongside five other members of the 103rd Sustainment Command. He had served in the U.S. Army Reserves for more than three decades and had deployed to the Middle East multiple times. He served his country with tremendous dignity and honor.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Marzan is remembered as a devoted husband, a loving father, and a friend to many. Residing in Des Moines for more than 15 years, he represented the very best of Iowa. He was a skilled problem-solver, a supportive friend, a mentor, and a brave American hero. He will be sorely missed by his family and friends.

I, alongside the entire Nation, mourn the loss of Chief Warrant Officer 3 Marzan and pray for his family. Our Nation owes him and his family an incredible debt of gratitude for his service and sacrifice. My heart goes out to all Iowans as we grieve the loss of Chief Warrant Officer 3 Marzan and his brothers in arms of the 103rd Sustainment Command.

HONORING MAJOR JEFFREY R. O'BRIEN

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, Waukee, IA, native MAJ Jeffrey O'Brien devoted his life to the defense of the United States for more than a decade. Today, I am mourning, alongside our entire Nation, his loss. His courageous decision to answer the call to serve and put our Nation before himself will never be forgotten.

Major O'Brien was commissioned into the U.S. Army Reserves nearly 15 years ago. He was assigned to the 103rd Sustainment Command based in Des Moines, IA. Major O'Brien deployed to the Middle East multiple times. His honorable service earned him several awards, including the Army Achievement Medal, Meritorious Unit Commendation, Army Superior Unit Award, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Army Service Ribbon, and the Armed Forces Reserve Medal with "M" Device.

On March 1, 2026, Iranian forces launched a drone strike on an American tactical operations center in Kuwait's Port of Shuaiba, killing Major O'Brien and five other American servicemembers. These servicemembers died in support of a mission to protect fellow Americans from the duplicitous and evil regime of the Ayatollah, which has been responsible for the deaths of thousands of Americans. Their sacrifice cannot be repaid and will not be forgotten.

Major O'Brien is survived by his courageous wife Roxane and his beautiful children, as well as his parents Helen and Daniel of Coggon, IA; his brothers David and Gregory of Marion, IA; and his sister Natalie Navarro. He was a true son of Iowa. A lifelong Iowan, he graduated from Iowa State University in 2005 with a bachelor of science in computer engineering. He excelled in his career as an information systems engineer and has led ProCircular's Defensive Cyber Operations program since 2024. He was a true leader, most known for his compassion, uplifting humor, and calm guidance.

On behalf of a grateful nation, I extend my deepest gratitude for Major

O'Brien's extraordinary service and sacrifice and my most sincere condolences to his family.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 4064. A bill to provide for a system of regulation of the offer and sale of digital commodities by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-2935. A communication from the President and Chair, Export-Import Bank of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to transactions involving exports to Egypt; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2936. A communication from the Secretary, Division of Corporation Finance, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Holding Foreign Insiders Accountable Act Disclosure" (RIN3235-AN75) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 5, 2026; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2937. A communication from the Section Chief, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Modifications to Rules for Computing Taxable Income or Loss and Foreign Currency Gain or Loss Under Section 987" (Notice 2026-17) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 5, 2026; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2938. A communication from the Section Chief, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Request for Comments on Electronic Furnishing of Certain Payee Statements" (Notice 2026-4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 5, 2026; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2939. A communication from the Acting Associate Director of Offshore Regulatory Programs, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Direct Final rule: Response to Comments: Offshore Downhole Commingling Regulatory Update" (RIN1014-AA68) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 3, 2026; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-2940. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 26-265, "LIHTC Rent Stabilization Exemption Clarification Amendment Act of 2026"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2941. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 26-264, "Soul of the City Business Improvement District Amendment Act of 2026"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2942. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 26-263, "Anacostia Business Improvement District Amendment Act of 2026"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.