

liable if they have committed harassment.

So I want to commend Senators KLOBUCHAR and BLUNT, who worked with many Members, including Senators GILLIBRAND, MURRAY, MCCASKILL, FEINSTEIN, HARRIS, and CORTEZ MASTO, for putting this together. I also thank my colleague, the majority leader. He and I were involved and are both co-sponsors of this legislation. It is an example, again, of the growing sprouts of bipartisanship coming forward in this body. I hope we can pass it quickly, with overwhelming, if not unanimous, support.

RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on another matter, this morning, with increasing desperation, President Trump tweeted several inaccuracies about the special counsel's investigation. No one should take the bait. I doubt very few who are looking at this in a non-partisan way will.

The recent demands from President Trump and his allies are just another part of a shameful campaign of harassment, intimidation, and obstruction of the Russia probe. It is all too clear that President Trump and his allies want to change the subject away from the duly constituted investigation into Russia meddling in the 2016 election and toward another fabricated scandal.

It began with conspiracies cooked up by Representative NUNES from "deep state" leaks to unmasking requests, claims of phone taps at Trump Tower, Uranium One, NUNES's midnight run to the White House, and the infamous Nunes memo. Now House conservatives, with the aid of the White House, seem to have successfully badgered DOJ officials into giving them a briefing on sources and methods of an FBI investigation. That is unprecedented and so very wrong.

Everyone knows what they are doing. They are hunting desperately for any scrap of information or innuendo that might help them sully the investigation or provide them a sneak peek at any evidence the FBI may have against the Trump campaign. If they have to distort and spread falsehoods about what is revealed in any meeting, they will, and for the President of the United States to pressure the Justice Department to reveal details and documents pertaining to an active investigation of the President's campaign for the purpose of denigrating it is a gross and unprecedented abuse of power, unlike any we have seen in a very long time. That is why so many people don't trust this President.

The only thing more outrageous than this meeting occurring at all is the fact that it is partisan. It is crystal clear that Representative NUNES intends to interfere with the investigation. He is not a down-the-middle investigator looking for truth. Everyone has seen that. NUNES gave up any pretense of objectivity long ago in that ridiculous,

late-night charade to the White House. Shamefully, someone I respect and someone I like, Speaker RYAN, is allowing this to happen. It will forever be a blot on his record. He can't be so afraid of the hard right and the President that he would allow this kind of "banana republic" behavior to go forward, and that is what NUNES is doing.

Regrettably, a few of my Senate colleagues seem to be allowing it to happen as well. Yesterday, I saw that a few of my friends on the other side sent a letter requesting to attend the meeting and supporting it but making no mention of the fact that not a single Democrat was invited.

My Republican friends know we have a process for dealing with the highly sensitive information of this type. It is called the Gang of 8. It is bipartisan. It has worked well. Any meeting between the Justice Department and Capitol Hill about such information should only be attended by Members of the Gang of 8.

So this morning, Leader PELOSI and I are sending a letter to Attorney General Rosenstein and Director Wray to request they reconsider holding the meeting at all and, if they move forward, to do so in a bipartisan fashion with the Gang of 8. If the meeting goes forward as planned right now—only partisan, only the worst actors on the House side in the room—no one should trust anything they say coming out of that meeting. It will be a sham. It will be a sham.

In our letter, we remind Attorney General Rosenstein and Director Wray they have a higher responsibility. I know they are being pushed around by the White House and by the White House's puppets like Congressman NUNES, but they must resist for the grand tradition of impartial justice under the law that has been in the veins of this country, in the bones of this country since 1789. To let this happen is disgraceful, and the blame really falls on the President and his puppets like, unfortunately, Chairman NUNES and some of the others who seem to be going along with him.

One other thing I might say though that I think should give Americans some solace is, I do not believe for one second that Special Counsel Mueller will be deterred. All this sideshow, all this attempt to discredit him and his investigation with all kinds of frivolous, silly, and often false statements and activities will not deter Mueller. The American people have the utmost confidence in him. He is a strong man. He is a quiet man. He happens to be a Republican appointed by the President's own appointees—hardly some nefarious representative who came out of nowhere from the deep state.

Mueller is going to go right ahead and see this investigation through to its natural conclusion. He will follow the facts where they lead. Americans will have confidence that if he finds something, it is real and, if he doesn't, he is not whitewashing a thing. That is

how he has gone about the investigation so far. It has resulted in dozens of indictments, several guilty pleas of top Trump campaign officials. When the President derogates Mueller and the investigation, he doesn't speak of any facts or knowledge; it is just wild allegations of something thrashing about, maybe because he realizes there might be something there. Who knows?

Special Counsel Mueller is a serious, quiet, diligent man, a lifelong Republican, a dedicated marine, universally respected. The American people can be assured that his investigation will not be blown off course by this hurricane of rightwing lies and intimidation coming from the President and his minions.

One final point on this topic, with several of his recent claims, it is clear President Trump lacks self-awareness. President Trump continues to peddle the myth that a deep state bias against his Presidency is driving the Russia probe, despite the fact that an active FBI investigation into his campaign was kept secret during his election while his opponent's was made public. If there was a deep state trying to hurt someone, they did a lot more to hurt Hillary Clinton than Donald Trump during the campaign. Everyone knows that. If the deep state were truly out to get President Trump, they would have made the active FBI investigation into his campaign's shady dealings with Russia a matter for the public record while he was running. This same lack of awareness—maybe hypocrisy—is apparent when the President reportedly uses an unsecured cell phone for some of his communications. Can you believe that after all the hay Donald Trump and his allies made about Secretary Clinton's handling of sensitive information, that the President—once in office—uses an unsecured cell phone, despite the fact that so many around him have told him that might be dangerous? It is bad for our national security, and his double standard is nothing short of outrageous.

GAS PRICES

Mr. SCHUMER. Finally, Mr. President, gas prices. Few things matter more to the average consumer than the price of a gallon of gasoline. When gas prices go through the roof, it eats away at a family's income, leaving less to cover the cost of anything else—groceries, medicine, tuition, a nice summer vacation, which families cherish. Recent data suggests that gas prices are about to climb even higher this summer, and experts suggest that actions and inactions on the part of the Trump administration are a major piece of that story.

According to energy analysts and experts, President Trump's decision to pull out of the Iran deal led to higher oil prices. OPEC has decided to cut production, also raising prices. Even though President Trump tweeted that OPEC's decision "will not be accepted," the American people are still

awaiting action from the President that will help America's motorists. He is good pals with the Crown Prince, who is running Saudi Arabia with the heads of the United Arab Emirates. He seems to have a good relationship with Putin. Why doesn't he jawbone them to at least stop constricting production so prices can come down? He isn't. He will talk to them about other things but not about something so vital to the middle class.

As a result, gas prices are headed toward \$3 a gallon, and the U.S. Energy Information Administration estimates that the average American family can expect to pay \$200 more this driving season than last driving season and \$250 more than the 2016 driving season. Prices are up more than 60 cents, on average, from the last day Obama was in office until today. Where is President Trump?

The rising gas prices will, as one Goldman Sachs economist put it, roughly cancel out the 2018 consumption boost from tax cuts. Big touting of the tax cuts, but when gasoline prices take it all away, where is our President? Whatever benefit working families might have seen from the Trump tax scam for the rich, if they got any benefit at all, is being wiped out by gas prices, and what about our Big Oil executives and oil companies? They got huge tax breaks—huge tax breaks. Why isn't the consumer seeing any of that at the pump? At the same time our oil companies get huge tax breaks, they raise prices on everybody. How is that helping the middle class? Why isn't President Trump jawboning them like he does on other issues? Where is he?

It is time for the President to stand up to OPEC, to stand up to Big Oil, and do what is necessary to lower gas prices. Remember, once again, the hypocrisy of this President. This is the same President who tweeted multiple times that President Obama was to blame for rising gas prices. So I would remind the President that the final price of gas under President Obama was an average of \$2.36 a gallon, and the current price under President Trump is \$2.92 a gallon and going up.

I hope, for the sake of the middle class and those struggling to get there—the folks for whom gas prices really make a difference—that President Trump takes immediate action to bring down the cost of gas. He has the power. He can force OPEC to do things by jawboning them. He can force the Big Oil companies to consider lowering their prices, given all the profits they got from his big tax bill. Where is he?

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.

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

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Brian D. Montgomery, of Texas, to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 3:15 p.m. will be equally divided in the usual form.

The majority whip.

CHINA

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, yesterday the Senate Banking Committee passed a very important piece of legislation out of the committee by a unanimous vote. I am very pleased that this legislation, which I will describe in a moment, received that sort of broad bipartisan support.

This is a bill I originally introduced with the senior Senator from California, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, to strengthen the review process of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, which plays a critical role in protecting our national security. The jurisdiction of this Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States hasn't been updated in more than 40 years, and bad actors like China continue to exploit gaps in the process to acquire sensitive national security know-how, as well as military and dual-use technology from U.S. companies.

I want to be quick to say that this is not about labeling foreign investment in the United States as bad. That is not true. Foreign investment is by and large a very good thing. But when our laws are being exploited to target cutting-edge, dual-use technology that has national security applications, that is a matter of national security. This is not about banning or labeling foreign investment as being bad.

I appreciate Chairman CRAPO and the Banking Committee's bipartisan work in advancing this narrowly tailored legislation to close the gaps that I just mentioned and safeguard our national security because I believe it is past time for us to do so. Every day we fail to pass this set of reforms is a day we are putting our future in jeopardy.

We need to maintain a sense of urgency and realize that when we are

talking about CFIUS, or the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, there is a much bigger issue at stake, and that is the issue of competing global visions.

China makes no secret about the fact that Karl Marx is, in many ways, its national hero. In fact, there was a weeklong celebration in China earlier this month which included a mandatory study session, led by President Xi, of Marx's famous work the Communist Manifesto.

Events like these in some ways show that China is a wolf in sheep's clothing. When it tries to present itself as westernizing its economy and becoming a friend to the global community of nations, China conveniently ignores certain facts about its alternative development model and state-controlled economy. It also tends to disguise and downplay its overall geopolitical aims, to rewrite the rules of our world order and recreate them in China's own Communist image.

Whether it is China's increasing belligerence in places like the South China Sea, its crushing of internal political dissent, its flagrant human rights violations, or its population controls, such as the one-child policy, China has repeatedly shown itself as a power-hungry authoritarian, willing and able to violate the rights of its own people, and dismissive and contemptuous of international norms.

I am not being hyperbolic. I am not exaggerating. This is just the truth—the hard truth—in front of us, if we will look. So let's not deceive ourselves otherwise. When China tries to just "blend in" internationally, let us be wary that its rosy rhetoric and misleading narrative of cooperation are often camouflage for its true and more troubling aims.

As we all know, right now, there are high-level negotiations ongoing between the U.S. executive branch and Chinese Government officials on the very important issue of international trade, but it is important to remember that in the West, belief in free trade is almost axiomatic. In democracies like ours, free trade is based on open markets, the free flow of capital and information, as well as the rule of law.

China, on the other hand, honors none of those things. It doesn't believe in open markets, it doesn't believe in the free flow of capital or information, and it doesn't believe in the rule of law. That reality is why we need to approach these trade negotiations delicately. We need to remain steely-eyed and make sure China isn't playing us for fools.

Of course, we are well aware of the need to tread lightly when it comes to trade. After decades of globalization, any overly broad limits on Chinese investment in the United States could harm American companies that need capital and customers to survive and grow. We need to resist that temptation.

China is not just any old trading partner. Its enterprises are state-