

Federal employees will not stay in their jobs without pay for months or years. They have to feed their families and pay their mortgage or their rent. Last week, the Senate passed S. 24, sponsored by 43 Democrats and one Republican, by voice vote. The bill guarantees that furloughed Federal workers would be paid from retroactively as soon as possible. This is the least Congress can do for these workers. It does not resolve, however, the pain Federal workers endure through a shutdown or guarantee that their homes will not be at risk during a shutdown or guarantee that food will be on their table or ensure that the Federal workers will stay in their jobs during a prolonged shutdown like the one this President apparently foresees. The solution is to shut down the shutdown—to do it now, to do it immediately.

This Trump shutdown doesn't only affect Federal employees and contractors. It affects the tens of thousands of Americans who rely on government services or need approval for projects. A local Sante Fe small business—a construction company, Sarcon Construction Corporation—is ready to begin an \$8.4 million project to build two new hangars at the Sante Fe Municipal Airport. This 32,000-square-foot project will generate \$650,000 in local tax revenue, and it will employ 75 to 100 people. Many of those people are unemployed now, waiting for this project to begin. This project is a big deal for my home city of Sante Fe.

Do you know why the project is stalled?

Sarcon can't get the necessary approval from the Federal Aviation Administration because of the Trump shutdown. The FAA personnel responsible for approval are furloughed. As we can see, the shutdown has real consequences for real people, especially for people like those unemployed construction workers in New Mexico, ready and eager to go to work but unable because of our President's inability to do his job.

The President's ridiculous claim that many Federal employees who are not getting paid support his shutdown has no basis in reality. The Federal workers in New Mexico who are furloughed or are working without pay and the Federal workers we have heard from do not support this shutdown.

An employee with the Department of Interior in Albuquerque writes:

While I am not sure how much good it would do, I emailed the White House to go on record that I am not one of the Federal employees the President is touting as wanting to be out of work without a paycheck until he gets his wall. I just want to go on record . . . that no, Federal employees do not want to stay out of work; we want to go back to work and get paid. This is not our fight, just his.

A husband and wife from Las Cruces who both work for the Environmental Protection Agency are also among the many Federal workers who did not support the Trump shutdown. They have three children, and they need their

paychecks. They don't support Trump's wall either. As EPA engineers, they understand and oppose the environmental destruction it will cause.

A scientist for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration at White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico is one of the hundreds of thousands of Federal workers who are essential and working without pay. He is working on critical space infrastructure and testing related to the Space-X launch scheduled for later this month. There is no good reason why this important work is not being paid for right now.

There is no good reason why any Federal employee is not getting their salary today. There is no good reason why Federal contractors' contracts are not being honored. This Federal shutdown hurts American families across my State and the Nation. It hurts our economy.

One Federal employee in New Mexico wanted to tell their story but was banned by their employer on the ground it would represent illegal lobbying of Congress. That is patently false. Federal employees contacting their elected representatives about this shutdown and its impact on their work and lives is not prohibited lobbying. The Trump administration has not only put these people out of work, it is now gagging them and denying them their free speech rights.

I call upon the President to end this terrible shutdown. He should do so immediately.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO BRANDON BARNHILL

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, when Paducah Police Chief Brandon Barnhill announced last October that he would be retiring at the end of the year, we knew he would leave large shoes to fill. During his 20 years with the department, including the last 5 it at the helm, Brandon helped develop a statewide reputation for excellence. Now, as Brandon retires to pursue new opportunities, I would like to take a moment to thank him for his service to the city of Paducah and the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Brandon graduated from Murray State University and earned a master's degree from Andrew Jackson University. It was at the Murray Police Department that Brandon began his noble vocation in law enforcement. He spent 3 years there before joining Paducah's police force in 1998.

Every day, Brandon wore the badge with pride. Out of love for his community, he faced down danger with integrity and professionalism. Our Commonwealth is blessed with an abundance of brave men and women who put themselves in harm's way to protect their fellow citizens, and Brandon fulfilled his duty with distinction.

It didn't take long for his potential to be recognized in Paducah. Promoted to detective the year after joining the department, Brandon continued to earn the respect of his colleagues both in Paducah and throughout the State. When the previous police chief announced his retirement in 2013, Brandon became the best choice to lead his colleagues to preserve the peace.

Brandon's leadership has helped place the Paducah Police Department among the most respected law enforcement organizations in Kentucky. One of his major initiatives was to strengthen the partnerships between the department and the local community. Brandon recently said he was particularly proud of the "Chief's Community Forum," a way to receive feedback on the perception of policing in the city. Throughout his service, Brandon became an example of integrity and credibility in law enforcement, and the Kentucky Association of Chiefs of Police named him the Chief of the Year in 2016.

In recent years, I have had the privilege to work with Brandon to bring increased Federal law enforcement resources to Paducah in support of the work already being done there to combat the substance abuse epidemic. In 2018, the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Federal Bureau of Investigation both committed to open new offices in Paducah and to dedicate assets to a partnership with State and local law enforcement. Brandon and the men and women of the Paducah Police Department were, of course, integral to this effort to keep our communities safe.

At his retirement celebration, Brandon was greeted with an outpouring of support and gratitude from the community he had spent two decades serving. I would like to take this opportunity to add my voice to those congratulating him for his remarkable success in Paducah. With his wife Renee and their children, Natalie and Reese, I wish him all the best in his next adventure. I ask my Senate colleagues to join me in thanking Chief Brandon Barnhill for his leadership at the Paducah Police Department.

TRIBUTE TO EDDIE ROGERS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, after 16 years of service to the people of Taylor County, KY, Judge-Executive Eddie Rogers is beginning his retirement. My friend leaves behind a legacy of passion for the men and women he represented, and I would like to take a moment to acknowledge Eddie's career in public service and to thank him for his commitment to Taylor County.