

They don't want to know why the President undermines our intelligence community and attacks law enforcement for investigating Russian interference. They don't want to know why he seeks to dismantle NATO, a pillar of security, prosperity, and the defense of western democratic ideals. They don't want to know why he shares Putin's joy when discord unfolds in Europe. They don't want to know why Trump forbade his interpreter from disclosing the contents of his conversations with Putin and took his notes. In short, they don't want to know the truth.

Well, now is not the time to ignore the facts or avoid the truth. We are living in a time of unthinkable questions, and should the facts reveal the most unthinkable of answers, we must do what is necessary to protect the interests of the United States of America.

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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. REED. Mr. President, first, let me commend the Senator from New Jersey for his very articulate, detailed, and factually specific discussion of Russian malign influence across the globe but, particularly, here in the United States.

RUSSIAN HYBRID WARFARE

Mr. President, today I rise to continue my series of speeches with regard to Russian hybrid warfare and, specifically, to provide policy recommendations in response to the threat from Russia, particularly the threat from information warfare, which was exhibited so substantially in the 2016 election.

The first part of the speech I gave on January 24 of this year, but let me briefly recap. As I described in my previous speech, Russia is prosecuting an ongoing, persistent campaign of information warfare targeted at the United States and Western democracies. These information operations are conducted along specific lines of effort and employ tactics, techniques, and procedures that Russia has developed over years of experimentation. Russia has been particularly effective in adapting its information warfare playbook to the digital age, weaponizing social media to magnify fear and mistrust, create chaos, and undermine our ability to respond effectively.

There are four steps we must adopt to more effectively counter Russian information warfare. First, we need the President to fulfill the obligations of his office and unite the American people in confronting this national security threat. Second, we need a coordinated strategy across our government and society to counter those threats.

Third, and flowing from the coordinated strategy, we need to ensure our government and society are organized and have the right capabilities to manage this ongoing confrontation in the information space. Finally, we need to develop, in coordination with our allies and partners, our own playbook to fight back.

Let me address each of these proposals in turn.

First of all, we need the President to be straight with the American people. The President's own national security officials and intelligence community agree about the existence and seriousness of the attacks being conducted by Russia against our democracy. The President, as our Nation's leader, must embrace the same conclusion. By conveying to the American people the urgency of this national security threat, the President can ensure that as a nation we are responding with the same level of commitment as we would to a military threat. This will elevate the urgency and gravity of the matter and help ensure we are committing the necessary level of resources for both military and nonmilitary measures to counter the Russian threat and build resilience against these malign activities.

Presidential leadership is necessary to help us move past domestic parochial politics. We have already seen how the failure to put national security over partisan politics all but decimated our ability to counter Russian information warfare during the 2016 election. The German Marshall Fund concluded in their policy blueprint from last year that "removing partisanship from the calculus in responding to this threat is critical." This is not a Democratic or a Republican problem. This is a national security problem, and it is severe. If we are going to overcome Russian efforts to magnify fear and distrust, we need our President to put our national security first.

Presidential leadership is just as imperative beyond our borders. The President speaks to the American people. His words must send a clear and consistent message to the Kremlin that we will not tolerate attacks against the United States. A real opportunity was missed when the President did not use his platform during the State of the Union to denounce Russian attacks on our democracy and showcase to the world the depth of his commitment in countering this threat.

The world must understand that the President is serious and committed to protecting the United States, its allies, and its partners against information warfare and will do so for as long as required. As a recent report by the Treasury Department on efforts by the United States to combat illicit finance noted: "Russia must . . . realize that the United States and its allies will not waver in our determination to prevent it from undermining our democracies, economies, institutions, and the values on which these pillars of global sta-

bility—ensured by United States leadership—will continue to stand."

The President should heed his own administration's guidance. He should do so publicly and with the resolve expected of the Commander in Chief.

Unfortunately, the President's history on this subject to date is far from encouraging. His policy positions do not follow dictums outlined by the Treasury Department and others in his administration but, instead, mirror Russian strategic objectives. His foreign policy goals and those of Russia seem to overlap. The President's devastating threats to withdraw from NATO and his denigration of the European Union, our trading partners, and those he considers his domestic political adversaries create or exacerbate internal divisions. The President must be made to realize that Russia supports his approach to foreign relations and domestic politics.

The President is, of course, by no means alone in demonizing those with whom he disagrees, but his voice is far more powerful as a result of the office he holds, and it is his obligation and duty to lead. Not only must the President distinguish his policy positions from those that Russia promotes overtly and through disinformation campaigns to tear up the fabric of the West, he must wholeheartedly reject those tactics and defend our Nation against them.

The President needs to get on the same page with much of the rest of the U.S. Government and Congress. The heads of the Department of Justice, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Director of National Intelligence all came together to send a tough message to Russia ahead of the 2018 midterm elections. Congress has been united, as well, as evidenced by the overwhelmingly bipartisan passage of the Russia sanctions bill as part of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act or CAATSA.

Yet this tough messaging to Russia is completely undermined when the President fails to confront Putin over Russian malign activities and, instead, repeatedly downplays the significance of Russian interference with our democracy and society.

It is further undermined when he mirrors Putin's talking points and dismisses the Russian nationals indicted by the special counsel, including 12 Russian military intelligence or GRU agents, as merely "bloggers from Moscow." It is further undermined when the administration unwinds sanctions against a business of Putin crony Oleg Deripaska. I would note that this deal went forward in spite of bipartisan action in the Congress to try to block it. The President's mixed messages and failure of leadership in mounting sustained and credible deterrence must end.

Despite the lack of Presidential leadership, there is work underway to counter Russian hybrid warfare—and

specifically information warfare—at the Departments of Homeland Security, State, Treasury, Justice, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as well as the National Security Agency, Cyber Command, and broader elements of the Department of Defense.

These efforts include standing up task forces between DHS and the FBI to target foreign influence within our borders, reorganizing the internal structures of DHS, and establishing the Russia Influence Group across several national security agencies. NSA and Cyber Command also established a working group called the Russia Small Group to counter Kremlin information warfare campaigns.

We must recognize the results these efforts have yielded to date. As authorized by this year's National Defense Authorization Act, or the NDAA, Cyber Command has undertaken offensive cyber operations. Treasury has sanctioned more than 270 Russian individuals and related entities. The Department of Justice has used our legal system to expose GRU and the Kremlin-linked troll organization activities.

These efforts signify that our capable civil servants and military officials have developed ways to mitigate aspects of the threat against us, but what is lacking is a synchronized campaign, prosecuted in a unified manner, to counter Russian hybrid warfare against the United States, our allies, and our partners.

General Scaparrotti, the head of European Command—who is on the frontlines of this threat—testified to the Armed Services Committee last March: “[I] don’t believe there is effective unification across the interagency, with the energy and the focus that we could attain.”

The Trump administration’s national defense strategy emphasizes the “re-emergence of long-term strategic competition,” including with Russia. I agree that this is an appropriate place to focus attention, but I have yet to see the changes needed to align with those priorities.

We must develop wholesale, scalable strategy to counter these threats below the level of armed conflict, including on the 21st-century battlefields of information and cyber space. It must be noted that Congress, including in the NDAA, has repeatedly urged the administration in this direction.

Two years ago, I secured a provision, along with my colleagues, to require the Department of Defense, in conjunction with the Department of State and other Agencies, to craft a Russian malign influence strategy. That strategy was finally delivered a few months ago, and it highlights the various efforts U.S. Government Departments and Agencies are undertaking. However, as I have said before, the administration must build on and implement that strategy, and these efforts must be conducted in a unified manner at the direction of the President both operationally and also as the chief spokesperson to the Nation and to the world.

This year’s NDAA authorized the appointment of a foreign influence coordinator on the National Security Council staff. This would be a good step toward organizing a whole-of-government approach to counter Russian information warfare. However, it remains to be seen whether the administration will stand up such a position.

Once we have laid out a comprehensive strategy, we must ensure that it can be successfully executed. This will require the support of the right organizational structures across the government and the whole of society.

The National Defense Strategy Commission concluded in its report that Russia “developed national strategies for enhancing their influence and undermining key U.S. interests that extend far beyond military competition . . . [C]omprehensive solutions to these comprehensive challenges will require whole-of-government and even whole-of-nation cooperation extending far beyond DOD.

As the Commission notes, we need to be institutionally capable of anticipating Russian information warfare developments. As a nation, we have been too slow, too late, and too divided in acknowledging the severity of these attacks on our governmental institutions and society. We watched Kremlin-directed information attacks in the Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and elsewhere, but we didn’t conceive that this Russian playbook would be deployed against us.

What is more, we are starting from a deficit in terms of the way our government is organized. After the Cold War, we dismantled the apparatus in place to recognize and counter threats from the Soviet Union. More recently, we found ourselves embroiled in two long counterinsurgency wars, which reoriented our planning, our systems, and our weapons to counter those threats of insurgents in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. We took our eye off the growing challenges to the international order in Europe, and frankly we were late to realize that the Russians had either pushed past any reset in U.S.-Russia relations or had never actually stopped seeing us as their enemy. So we need to rebuild our capacity to challenge this threat.

First, we must ensure that we have the intelligence capabilities in place to yield a more complete understanding of the nature of the threat. One of the reasons that the Kremlin caught us off guard is because we significantly downsized the office in the CIA unofficially called Russia House, which was tasked with countering Russia during the Cold War.

While the number of Russian analysts has grown in recent years, we must make sure that we grow and retain the expertise and the budget dedicated to analyzing, attributing, anticipating, and exposing Russian information warfare campaigns on a persistent basis.

As I quoted in part 1 of this speech, the senior vice president of the Center

for European Policy Analysis, Edward Lucas, explained that we “are still playing catch up from a long way behind. We are looking in the rearview mirror, getting less bad at working out what Russia just did to us. We are still not looking through the windshield to find out what’s happening now and what’s going to be happening next.”

If we are ever going to get out from looking at this problem through the rearview mirror, we need to understand the patterns of Russia’s aggressive behavior and be able to anticipate the next attack.

In addition to ramping up Russia expertise, there needs to be a coordinating body across the national security apparatus to provide intelligence and analysis sharing. This body would work to provide a common operating picture for our government and help with strategic coordination across U.S. Government Agencies involved in countering hybrid warfare.

A proposal to stand up an inter-agency fusion cell similar to what I am describing was recommended in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee minority staff report from January 2018. That report envisioned that such a center “should include representatives from the FBI, CIA, the Departments of Homeland Security, State, Defense, and Treasury, and it should immediately produce a strategy, plan, and robust budget that coordinates all current and projected government programming to counter Russian Government interference and malign influence.”

Similarly, the Defending American Security from Kremlin Aggression Act, or DASKA, a bill that Senator MENENDEZ indicated was reintroduced yesterday in a bipartisan fashion—Senator MENENDEZ and Senator GRAHAM are leading this effort—includes language to establish such a fusion center. I urge my colleagues to support this type of a center. It will go a long way toward further integrating a whole-of-government approach.

In conjunction with standing up such a center, Congress may need to examine the authorities of some intelligence agencies, as it becomes harder to detect and counter Russian operations that look increasingly “American” in nature.

Our military institutions also need to be structured to counter Russian information operations—in particular those conducted by the GRU. As laid out in part 1 of this speech, these operations are persistent and ongoing, reflecting current Russian military doctrine, and follow discernable lines of effort. We must bring appropriate military tools to counter this threat.

Last November, General Nakasone, who serves as both the head of Cyber Command and the Director of the NSA, explained that America’s adversaries, including Russia, “are looking to take us on below the level of armed conflict. Our military must be able to . . . compete below the level of armed conflict.

This is what great power competition looks like today, and it's what we will look at as we look to the future."

Indeed, this type of conflict requires new tools in cyber space, including offensive cyber operations and updated protocols for using them.

It should be noted that Cyber Command took important steps to safeguard the 2018 midterm elections. Several days prior to the election, National Security Advisor Ambassador John Bolton acknowledged this role, stating that the United States was "undertaking offensive cyber operations . . . aimed at defending the integrity of the electoral process." Similarly, the Department of Defense explained that it worked to "frustrate and prevent adversary interference in the 2018 election cycle." It appears that these cyber operations contributed to more successful deterrence or a blunting of the Russian information warfare campaign than during the 2016 Presidential election.

That said, we also must acknowledge that the Russians have not stopped their operations against us, and they don't undertake information warfare campaigns only at election time. As we learn to counter their operations, they learn better methods to attack us, often with increased sophistication and less detectability. In order to stay up to speed, we must institutionalize the temporary arrangements that the Department of Defense assembled for addressing information warfare operations in the midterm elections and make them permanent. Our efforts must be persistent and scalable to ensure we have the operational capacity to respond to these attacks against our democracy.

Along those same lines, in last year's NDAA, we required the Secretary of Defense to establish a process to integrate strategic and cyber-enabled information operations across the Department. While information operations were a feature of military operations during the Cold War, today they are sometimes an afterthought. Having better integrated procedures for these types of operations would be a good start for getting organized inside DOD to effectively counter Russian information warfare below the level of conventional conflict.

Just as important as ensuring that we have the right military and intelligence tools, is ensuring that we have the appropriate nonmilitary tools to counter the threat. An additional cast-off after the Cold War was the U.S. Information Agency, which was devoted to advancing public diplomacy, building narratives, and extolling American virtues to foreign audiences. We should consider carefully whether it makes sense to revive some of these capabilities for today's information age.

One important step toward reestablishing such a capability was enlarging the mission of the State Department's Global Engagement Center in the fiscal year 2017 NDAA to "lead, synchronize,

and coordinate efforts of the Federal Government to recognize, understand, expose, and counter" foreign state propaganda and disinformation targeting U.S. national security interests. However, the Global Engagement Center has been under resourced and slow to execute its mission. We need to accelerate this effort.

We also need to look at our tools and tactics for informing our domestic audience, including how best to address concerns about the integrity of elections arising as a result of Russian meddling.

As a recent report from CSIS on election security stressed, "Credibility is as important as accuracy." We should examine what approach would best serve the American people in terms of validating the integrity of election results, as well as mobilizing to respond should our elections come under attack.

This effort could be centered around a dedicated office or assigned to a group of current or former trusted government officials. Their mission would be to rapidly communicate to the American public regarding the integrity of elections in response to Russian efforts to undermine the public faith in democracy, including through information warfare attacks.

The administration has taken steps in this direction, including the President's Executive order regarding election interference from last September, which requires a 45-day report assessing attacks from foreign adversaries. But this won't be fast enough to counter information warfare campaigns in real time. These attacks are moving at the speed of the internet. We don't have 45 days to wait.

As we look to the 2020 Presidential elections, it is imperative that we invest more in election security. While progress has been made since 2016, it has paled in comparison to the magnitude of the challenge.

Last Congress, I was disappointed when an amendment to provide an additional \$250 million in election security grant funding was blocked by my colleagues on the other side. This funding would have built upon the \$380 million that was appropriated for election security grants in the fiscal year 2018 Omnibus Appropriations Act. At the time of the vote last summer, the initial funding was already committed to the States, and 91 percent of those funds had been disbursed. We will need to provide the funding necessary if we are to claim that we are committed to improving election security. In addition, the Kremlin exploits the existence of insecure or outdated systems to promote information warfare operations against us, furthering the narrative that there are so-called cracks in our democracy.

Our government is not the only actor that must play a role in meeting these threats. We must also look to our society and the private sector. As I discussed, the government failed to have

the imagination to fully realize the extent of the coming threat. Unfortunately, the ways in which the social media companies responded to these attacks mirrored the government's failure of imagination. Social media companies were held up as beacons of innovation with a view that technology could bring people together in common cause, but these companies failed to conceive that these same tools could also be used for malign purposes—to misinform as well as to inform.

When originally confronted with the notion that the Kremlin had had an impact on the 2016 election, Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg dismissed out of hand any role his company may have played. He said: "To think . . . [Facebook] influenced the election in any way is a pretty crazy idea." Yet we now know that the manipulation of social media is one of the primary lines of effort used by the Kremlin and Kremlin-linked actors to mount their information warfare campaigns against us.

Certain social media companies have made some reforms and worked with law enforcement and DHS to take down fraudulent networks—or what the companies deem as inauthentic accounts. For instance, late last month, Twitter announced that before the 2018 midterms, it removed 418 Russian accounts whose behavior mimicked that of the Kremlin-linked troll organization. However, we just can't assume, going forward, that these companies will act in the best interest of U.S. national security and continue to cooperate without some guidance or, perhaps, even regulation. These are private, for-profit companies, and like any company, they are worried how reputational damage will affect their bottom lines. If they cannot organize themselves effectively to combat warfare campaigns, Congress will have to legislate solutions.

Such an effort is already underway in the European Union, which has worked on several fronts to protect users of social media. The EU has established data privacy rules, known as the General Data Protection Regulation, or GDPR, that seek to strengthen individual rights for the protection of personal data. In addition, the EU has worked with online platforms which are developing voluntary standards to fight disinformation, known as the Code of Practice on Disinformation. As well, EU member nations have also made threats of regulation and fines if social media companies do not do more to address disinformation and fake accounts. It would make sense to look closely at what the EU is implementing to see what might be appropriate for our purposes.

As I discussed in part 1 of this speech, one of the main issues in the 2016 election was that social media companies didn't have the visibility into what had occurred across platforms, including Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and others, making it harder to detect and combat Russian information warfare operations. As mentioned

previously, two independent reports commissioned by the Senate Intelligence Committee examined a subset of data provided by the social media companies relating to the 2016 election, and they identified significant Russian activity across social media platforms that was not discovered at the time.

As we look at how society must organize to counter this threat, we need greater visibility across platforms so that we can more effectively anticipate these operations coming and defend against future interference. One approach to further that goal could be the establishment of a social media repository to compile data relevant to identifying and countering foreign information operations. This database would be a tool for trusted independent researchers and academics to gain insight into cross-platform trends and provide an analysis of attacks.

To this point, last month, Cyber Commander General Nakasone testified before the Senate Intelligence Committee that the analysis of the independent reports, based on the limited data provided by a few social media companies, was “very effective.” He added:

As we prepared for the 2018 midterms, we took a very, very close look at the information that was provided there. We understood our adversary very well, and we understood where their vulnerabilities also lie.

Imagine how helpful it would be if this repository were ongoing and comprehensive.

America’s intelligence and defensive capabilities are vast and adaptable. To be sure, there is considerable work ahead to restructure, realign, and focus efforts across the government and society, but America will only be best positioned to prevent these attacks in the future once we move from a defensive posture to a strategy that plays to our strengths.

We must come up with our own American playbook to counter Russian information warfare. The Kremlin has resorted to these dirty tricks because it knows it will not win in a fair fight. We should not try to play by their rules or be symmetric in our response. We should counter Russia in the arenas where we have strategic advantages. We should counter Russia in ways that uphold and enhance our democracy and the rule of law. We should counter Russia in ways that show our strength and credibility.

As President Reagan stated: “The ultimate determinate in the struggle now going on for the world will not be bombs and rockets but a test of wills and ideas—a trial of spiritual resolve, the values we hold, the beliefs we cherish and the ideas to which we are dedicated.”

As I have explained, Kremlin and Kremlin-linked propaganda and disinformation seek to amplify fear and mistrust and convince the American public that our democracy is no better than the autocratic regime in Moscow. To push back against this

moral equivalence promoted by Putin and other authoritarian regimes, we must promote and highlight our values. In doing so, we can showcase our adherence to justice and the rule of law by exposing Russian aggression against us, our allies, and our partners.

We must assist and protect journalism, including in countries where criticizing the Kremlin and exposing the truth may put reporters in danger. In concert with allies and partners, we must encourage and support civil society groups here and abroad to protect human rights and enhance rule of law protections. We can use sanctions as a tool to expose Kremlin abuses and raise reputational costs to Putin and his cronies, such as the sanctions provided in the Magnitsky Act.

Our American playbook must also include options for responding to Russian malign activities in cyberspace. The Russians are weaponizing information stolen from our government officials and candidates for public office. We must define and harden our cyber doctrine and clearly understand how to use our military in these new domains. Our responses are likely to be asymmetric rather than employing the same dirty tricks from the Russian playbook. Ultimately, the integrity of our electoral campaigns should lead all U.S. political parties and actors to pledge not to use hacked or stolen materials to attack or smear each other.

The media, too, should contemplate what its responsibilities are to the citizens of this country when covering elections. They should be wary of covering aspects of political campaigns in ways that may aid or abet foreign information operations. While we must always protect the constitutional right of freedom of the press, the media may come to conclude that covering hacked materials without appropriately framing the source of those materials or including comments from Kremlin-linked trolls claiming to be American citizens is no longer appropriate.

Further, as I discussed in part 1 of this speech, a major line of effort for Russia is Kremlin-directed deception operations using social media to penetrate our political and social debates and magnify feelings of fear and mistrust. Our American playbook must also include ways to educate our citizens with knowledge of these plots and provide additional media literacy tools, including teaching our young people how to evaluate what they see online and further make the case to the public for the importance and value of democratic institutions.

In addition, we must strengthen support for one of our greatest strategic advantages—our alliances and partnerships globally. We must take steps to educate the American public about the central role alliances play for our national security. We must also look outward, supporting our alliances and stepping up our diplomatic outreach to help resolve longstanding regional conflicts overseas so that Russia may no

longer use information warfare campaigns to exploit those situations to their advantage.

Our responses to Russian information operations are most effective when we act in concert with allies and partners. The sanctions levied on Russia after their illegal annexation of Crimea were effective because they were implemented together with the EU. We have also witnessed the effects of the more than 25 countries expelling Russian diplomats in solidarity with the United Kingdom in response to the Skripal poisoning. The United States worked closely with Greece to blunt Russia’s attempts to undermine an agreement between Greece and North Macedonia that would open the door for North Macedonia to join NATO. As these examples show, the cost to Russia is greater when they aren’t simply dismissed as a unilateral shunning by the United States.

As the former Estonian Foreign Minister and Ambassador to Russia stated:

Joint initiatives are more likely to deter hackers. If they don’t take seriously one country, they will take seriously 30 countries when they will jointly blame a hacker or foreign nation for an attack.

Last week, the Acting Attorney General and the Secretary of Homeland Security certified that our government “concluded there is no evidence to date that any identified activities of a foreign government or foreign agent had a material impact on the integrity or security of election infrastructure or political/campaign infrastructure used in the 2018 midterm elections.”

However, we should not take that certification as a reason to let down our guard. We seem to be getting better at responding to the types of attacks perpetrated against the United States in 2016, but that is no indicator that we have become better at anticipating future attacks. The Director of the Department of Homeland Security’s Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency warned last November:

The [2018] midterm is . . . just the warm-up or the exhibition game. . . . The big game for adversaries is probably 2020.

This statement was reinforced by DNI Coats, who testified to the Senate Intelligence Committee late last month: “Our adversaries and strategic competitors are probably already looking to the 2020 U.S. elections as an opportunity to advance their interests,” and also “Moscow may employ additional influence toolkits—such as spreading disinformation, conducting hack-and-leak operations or manipulating data—in a more targeted fashion to influence U.S. policy, actions and elections.”

We must think creatively to ensure that we are ahead of this curve. I am confident that this is a challenge that we can meet and conquer with Presidential leadership, a whole of government approach, and the energy and resources necessary. We can and we must do this.

As President John F. Kennedy said: "We are not here to curse the darkness but to light the candle that can guide us through that darkness to a safe and sane future."

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I had planned to come to the floor this evening to talk about our national parks and to talk about the lands bill that just passed, but I also want to talk for a moment, if I could, about the legislation we just voted on on this floor. It had to do with border security, and it had to do with six other appropriations bills that include many of our Departments and Agencies. It also had to do with keeping the government from shutting down. If this legislation is now passed by the House tonight, which is expected, and is signed into law by the President, which is expected, we will avoid a government shutdown, which is really important. We don't need to go there again.

I also want to talk, for a second, about the package itself and the most controversial part of it, which has to do with the border. I voted yes this evening, and I did so because the legislation we just signed takes really important steps towards strengthening our southern border. Frankly, I am not hearing much about that on either side of the aisle.

First, let me just say that President Trump had a proposal on the border. His was a comprehensive proposal—yes—of more barriers and fencing but also of more cameras, more remote sensing, more screening at ports of entry, more judges, more Border Patrol, and so on.

That legislation that he asked us to take up included \$22.8 billion—a lot of money, right?

Now, some will say: But Congress didn't follow what President Trump wanted to do because they gave him less money.

The border security funding in this package is actually about \$300 million less than the President asked for. It is \$22.5 billion.

But Congress decided—and I think Congress is right about this—that our southern border is in need of help right now. Some call it a crisis. Some just say it is a big problem. I don't care what you call it. We need more help on the border. We need more barriers, but we also need more cameras, more remote sensing, and more ways to stop the drugs from coming in, most of which come through the ports of entry. Yes, we need more people to be able to respond. Yes, we need more judges to be able to handle this backlog of immigration cases that has built up. Yes, we need more humanitarian assistance.

By the way, the Trump administration and the Democrats from Congress supported both of those things. The place where there was a difference was the amount of funding to put into the

barriers. They gave him less money than he asked for for new barriers and new fencing.

The agreement includes nearly \$1.4 billion for that—for the new barriers and new fencing. By the way, it might also surprise you to learn that that is the most money Congress has ever appropriated for fencing and new barriers in any fiscal year.

Let me repeat that. This is the most money Congress has ever voted for to provide more barriers along the border. And these are new barriers.

Now, again, if you listen to folks—sometimes on both sides of the aisle—on this issue, you might not hear that, but this is the most ever in any one fiscal year. By the way, we are already 4½ months into this fiscal year.

I am glad we provided the funding because I think it is needed. I believe we do have a crisis on the border. I believe it has to do with illegal immigration, but also it has to do with drugs that are devastating my home State of Ohio.

Crystal meth is on the rise—pure crystal meth from Mexico, almost all of it. Ninety percent of the heroin coming into my State comes across that southern border.

We now have fentanyl coming in from across the border in addition to coming straight from China. We now have, of course, cocaine coming across the southern border. We have serious drug problems that need to be addressed.

I have done a lot of work on the issue of human trafficking, and I can just tell you that what we have learned, sadly, is that the amount of trafficking going on along the southern border increases as you have more and more people who are trafficking human beings for work—illegal immigration, which I think is mostly for people coming here to find a better life for work, but they are bringing with them a lot of people who are trafficking women and children.

So the trafficking issue is real. That is what the experts tell us, and that is another reason for us to have a more secure southern border. So I am glad that we are providing the funding.

With regard to the new barriers, what the President had asked for is that his funding go to fund the top priorities of the Border Patrol. Customs and Border Protection has a border security improvement plan. You can check it out online. The border security improvement plan has a number of priorities. The President wanted to fund those priorities. This proposal that we voted on tonight does fund about 55 miles of new barriers—not just fixing up old barriers, but new barriers—which comprise the top two priorities of that border security plan.

Would the President like to do more in terms of barriers? Yes, he would, and he is talking about ways to do that.

But my point tonight is very simple. If you really care about the southern border, then, this was the right vote to

take because, with regard to barriers, this is the most Congress has ever provided for new barriers, new fencing.

I hope this will work to help stop this flow of drugs into our country, to help control the illegal immigration that is happening, to help stop the trafficking of women and children that goes on along the border, but it is going to require more work. We all know that. This is a start, and my hope is that by passing this legislation we can help to start those even more serious efforts to deal with our broader issues here, including our broader immigration issues that have to be dealt with.

So I am hopeful that the House will pass it. I am hopeful that the President will sign it. I think he will. He says he will.

I am also glad that we are not going into a shutdown. Shutdowns make no sense. We have legislation, as some of you know, to try to stop government shutdowns from happening in the future. Why? Because they are bad for taxpayers, who end up paying more, not less, often because workers who are furloughed actually get paid even when they are not working, but also because of the inefficiencies of government during a shutdown. Taxpayer services are reduced—everything from meat inspection to the security lines, to the IRS information line to figure out how to file your doggone taxes. I mean, all of that gets affected.

So shutdowns don't make sense. It really doesn't make sense for the men and women who work for the Federal Government and for their families. During this last shutdown of 35 days, workers who were told they were essential, therefore, had to report for work, and they were not getting paid. So, again, those who weren't working got paid after the fact, and those who were working were not getting paid during the shutdown. That doesn't make a lot of sense to me.

By the way, missing two pay periods is a big deal for a lot of the government workers I know because they live paycheck to paycheck. They had rent payments. They had house payments, in some cases. They had car payments. They had real issues getting through this. Let's not put them through it again. It is not their fault. They shouldn't be pawns in this.

So my hope is that we can pass the "end government shutdown" legislation. It has 33 cosponsors now, which is a lot for around here, and it gets you started. A third of the Senate has said: Yes, let's stop these things. That is a big deal. My hope is that on both sides of the aisle our leadership agrees to take this to the floor. Let's have a vote on it. Let's decide whether people think shutdowns are a good idea or not. I think they are a bad idea.

By the way, it is the fifth Congress in which I have introduced this legislation, and I must say that we have never had this many cosponsors. So I do think more and more people are realizing that this is just not the way we