

And to Angela, Roman, Alex, and Diego, I love you. Thank you for your love and your support of my public service.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators LUJÁN, CARPER, and myself be allowed to complete our remarks before the rollcall vote.

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

BORDER SECURITY

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Thank you, Madam President.

The southern border. The situation at our southern border has devolved into chaos. That is what I am hearing from some of my former House colleagues who have been on that border today.

According to them, we are once again facing a crisis. Thirteen days ago, Customs and Border Protection announced that they were deploying more agents to help manage the spike and apprehensions of adults and unaccompanied alien children.

Then, last Monday, news broke that Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas had sent an email to DHS staff begging for volunteers to go to the border and help with logistics and humanitarian aid.

It is obvious they need help on the border. In January alone, the Customs and Border Patrol detained nearly 78,000 people—more than double the number of apprehensions in January of 2020.

In February, that number jumped to more than 100,000 arrests and detentions. CBP took more than 9,000 unaccompanied minors into custody that month, prompting the administration to open two overflow detention centers to house them.

Listen to these numbers: 100,000 arrests and detentions in February; 9,000 unaccompanied minors being taken into custody that month—having to open 2 overflow detention centers.

New data released last Wednesday shows that our agents are now detaining more than 4,000 people along the border every single day—4,000 every day.

Our facilities and resources are exhausted, and so are the agents responsible for controlling this out-of-control situation.

It did not have to be this way. Secretary Mayorkas has accused the Trump administration of “dismantling our Nation’s immigration system.” That is his quote. But if he wants to know who is really responsible, he should look to the current White House.

I have stated time and again how disastrous President Biden’s policy of governing by Executive fiat has been. Thirty-four Executive orders in his first 50 days—34.

Also, he has suspended construction of the border wall, jeopardizing our na-

tional security. He has embraced DACA. He halted most deportations. He cut domestic immigration arrests by 60 percent and dismantled the migrant protection protocols.

This administration threw our existing immigration law out the window and let the world know that when it comes to illegal entry, not only will we look the other way, this administration is encouraging them to come. Even their Cabinet nominees are playing by these new rules of encouraging individuals to break our laws, to come to the country illegally. They are encouraging this.

Last week, this Chamber voted to discharge Xavier Becerra’s nomination from committee. I voted no. He is one of the most flagrant offenders out there when it comes to sending these signals. He has openly admitted he would like to decriminalize illegal entry and offer Medicaid to anyone who manages to get across the border.

They have made a lot of promises that they know they are not going to be able to live up to, and now they are trying to walk it all back, walk back the hope that sparked in thousands of people because they have heard that the border was going to be open. They are even wearing the T-shirts with the slogan, “Biden, let us in.”

They are going to have to walk back the mess that is there on the border, and I am fearful and concerned that their walk-backs are not going to work because from what we are hearing about the border, they have lost control of that border.

I look forward to traveling to the border for a briefing on the situation. This administration does not want their critics to see what is happening down there. There are days you would think they have got a news blackout going at the border.

This isn’t just a problem in Texas or California or Arizona or New Mexico. Every town is a border town and every State is a border State because of the drugs, the human trafficking, sex trafficking, and gangs that are streaming across our border.

You know, it means that no matter how hard you try, you can’t hide the tragedy that inevitably unfolds when your immigration policy is to have zero immigration policy at all, just open the border and let them come.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

NOMINATION OF DEBRA ANNE HAALAND

Mr. LUJÁN. Madam President, I rise today in anticipation of a historic vote that the Senate will take in a few moments to confirm DEBRA ANNE HAALAND as Secretary of the Interior. I am incredibly humbled to be able to preside over this body’s confirmation, in just a few minutes, of my good friend and fellow New Mexican.

This marks the first time that a Native American will take her seat in the President’s Cabinet, making her the second highest ranking Native Amer-

ican to ever serve in the Federal Government.

As a Pueblo woman and 35th-generation New Mexican, DEB HAALAND has a long overdue perspective to contribute to the Department of the Interior’s mission of protecting our natural resources and public lands, and honoring America’s trust responsibilities to Tribal nations.

She is uniquely equipped to begin to repair the relationship between the Interior and the domestic nations it serves—to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, these indigenous nations, these sovereign nations, these important departments, the Indian Health Service, the Bureau of Indian Education.

Speaking to Pueblo and Tribal members in New Mexico, I know the significance of her confirmation, how it transcends policy. For young people in our State, she is the embodiment of the old adage that if you see it, you can be it.

Knowing my friend DEB, although she will be the first, she is committed to not being the last.

As former vice chair of the House Natural Resources Committee, DEB HAALAND also brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to her role as the Interior Secretary. She has been a longtime champion of climate action, creating good-paying jobs, clean energy, and outdoor recreation.

She played a key role in passing the Great American Outdoors Act out of the House of Representatives, successfully protecting New Mexico landscapes and setting ambitious goals for conservation with her Thirty by Thirty Resolution to Save Nature. But of all the qualifications and accomplishments that DEB HAALAND will bring to the Department of the Interior, there is one that stands out to those who know her best—her empathy.

DEB’s experience as a single mother struggling to keep a roof over her family’s head allows her to connect with compassion to her constituents and informs every aspect of her work. It is fitting that she will serve under a President who has made empathy the trademark of his administration.

I have no doubt that Secretary HAALAND will leave a mark on the Department of the Interior and on history as we know it. I look forward to continuing to work with my friend to make a difference for the people of New Mexico.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, one floor above this Senate Chamber, near a bank of elevators, sit the marble busts of two leaders of the Ojibwa, or Chippewa, people who came to Washington, DC, in 1855 to sign a treaty with the U.S. Government.

The terms of the treaty had been dictated by the U.S. Government: The Ojibwa people would surrender more than 2 million acres of their ancestral homeland in northern Minnesota. In exchange, the Tribes would receive less than \$20,000 in cash, goods, and services, and assistance to resettle on two reservations.