

friend, the Minister of Transportation, and others in the Canadian Government to try to make sure we can get this spirit of cooperation that will benefit both our State, our country, and your country.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, I just want to make clear after Senator LEE's statement, No. 1, that I appreciate my colleagues from Alaska being as cooperative as they have been.

These issues are a matter of vital consumer protection and worker safety. We are talking here about defibrillators and a requirement that there be certain minimum numbers on these ships. We are talking about bodies, tragically, having to be returned if there is a death on one of these ships. We are talking about some rights for consumers that the industry itself has approved and that we are just incorporating into this amendment and enabling the Department of Transportation to enforce. So I want to make clear that these are reasonable and, in fact, in my view, very minimal protections—a first-step, another step.

I appreciate the agreement that we have been able to reach with our colleagues from Alaska on them, and I am disappointed that our colleague from Utah has objected. But I will do my best to work with them in trying to resolve Senator LEE's objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, to just wrap up this discussion, I really appreciate the comments from my colleague Senator SULLIVAN because I think you have really keyed in on where we are today.

The Alaska Tourism Restoration Act is such a narrowly defined in scope initiative to, again, create this very brief period of time to allow for what is left or what will remain of a tourist season to proceed. But we are faced with bigger issues, and these issues clearly evoke great passion and debate, whether it is consumer protection or to Senator LEE's concerns that he has raised overall about Jones Act and PVSA.

So those are significant issues that will be debated in committees as we move forward and further debated on the floor. But I think, at this point in time, the recognition from our colleagues from Connecticut and from Utah that this effort that we are trying to make in Alaska to redeem a small segment of our tourist season—those who come to us by cruise ship—that just perhaps the strength of cooperation you see here today will be that level of encouragement for the ships to start coming north in anticipation of clearer and more beneficial guidance, working with CDC.

It has been a lot of pieces to knit together. It hasn't been particularly easy or pretty, but I would like to think that the folks in southeastern Alaska and throughout the State will see the

benefits of this in the weeks and months ahead.

With that, Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, last night, the American people heard from President Biden in his first address to a joint session of Congress. The American people heard him speak about many of the same themes he touched on in his inauguration: unifying the country, healing the soul of our Nation, healing the divisions that divide us. It sounds great, but those who have paid attention to the President's actions know that his rhetoric and his actions don't line up.

The only legislative achievement so far for President Biden has been an eye-popping \$1.9 trillion piece of spending that was branded as COVID-19 relief. It was so controversial that our Democratic colleagues didn't bother to use the standard legislative procedure. Instead, they used the budget reconciliation process so they could make it a law without a single Republican vote—hardly coming together and unifying the country.

As expected, President Biden had the audacity to brand this legislation as the reason why we have made such progress in fighting COVID-19. He touted the fact that America has provided more than 220 million COVID vaccinations during his first 100 days in office. But he didn't mention the fact that less than 1 percent of the funding in his signature legislation actually supported vaccinations—less than 1 percent. Less than 10 percent was directly related to COVID-19 at all.

If there were any doubts that this liberal spending binge was about to end, President Biden cleared that up last night too. He talked about his more than \$2.6 trillion American Jobs Plan, which relies on a very generous interpretation of the word “infrastructure,” or should I say Orwellian. He discussed the \$1.8 trillion American Families Plan, which includes everything from universal preschool to free community college, to mandatory paid leave policies and tax provisions.

You know, you have to love politicians when they talk about giving away free stuff. The folks back home know better. Somebody has to pay for it. As my friend Senator TIM SCOTT said in the Republican response last night, these policies could put Washington even more in the middle of Americans' lives, from cradle to college.

These three proposals total more than \$6 trillion—an amount so large, it is hard for any of us to wrap our head around it. That is on top of the money that was spent last year in a bipartisan effort to defeat COVID-19. The proposals equate to a spending rate of \$60 billion a day during the President's first 100 days in office.

Six trillion dollars is one-quarter of our gross domestic product. If you con-

vert our country's World War II spending into today's dollars, the three Biden spending proposals are even more expensive than what it cost us to arm and defeat Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany.

But I want to be clear. These aren't wartime expenses. These aren't even necessary expenses, in many cases. These proposals have absolutely nothing to do with our current fight against COVID-19. Two hundred billion dollars to build or retrofit “sustainable” places to live; \$225 billion for paid family leave; \$178 billion on electric vehicle chargers—more socialism for rich people; \$400 billion for home-based care. This money adds up pretty quickly.

I am not saying our country should cut off all of our spending altogether. There are necessary expenses and investments that need to be made. But this is not the time for a spending binge. We need to make smart financial decisions that will serve the next generation, not drive them further and further into debt.

The biggest question here, though, as with any type of government spending, is, How are you going to pay for it? For the Biden administration, the answer is simple: higher taxes. In fact, the President has proposed the largest tax hikes in more than half a century.

Now, economics 101 would teach you that tax increases aren't a clear and easy way to boost revenue, especially when your economy is already on a fragile footing. President Obama observed as much when we were recovering from the great recession of 2008, that raising taxes during a recovery from a recession is a bad idea. Raising trillions of dollars in new taxes will not set us up for a strong recovery; it will simply throw even more wrenches into our sluggish economic engine.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the American economy was on a roll. The economy was booming. Unemployment was at a 50-year low. Companies were coming back on shore, moving their headquarters to the United States, in part because of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. The 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act set the stage for this recovery.

Instead of building upon what we did in 2017, the administration now wants to repeal those tax provisions in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and double down on the old, tired talking points that America can simply tax and spend and regulate itself into prosperity.

Massive tax hikes are not the way to stabilize a shaky recovery, and I worry how much damage these increases will do if our Democratic colleagues insist on doing more partisan, party-line legislating.

The President did nothing to ease my concern about another looming problem, and that is the crisis on our border. For months, the President and members of his administration have denied what is a clear and growing crisis on the border. I hoped he might finally acknowledge the reality of the

situation in his prime-time address and commit to working together with us to solve it, but no such luck. Instead, he talked about the need to provide a solution for DACA recipients and under-take broader immigration reform.

I want to be clear here. I agree that Congress should take action to give DACA recipients the legal certainty and stability they deserve. This is a priority for folks on both sides of the aisle, and I hope we will finally be able to get a bill on the President's desk to help these young people who have done nothing wrong. More broadly, there is no denying our immigration system is in need of reform. It is outdated and inefficient and simply doesn't meet the needs of our country today. But we are not ready for those types of conversations until we solve the immediate crisis at the border.

Last month alone, more than 172,000 migrants crossed our southern border, and 100,000 crossed in February. Nearly 19,000 of those individuals who came across last month were unaccompanied children.

We have seen migration in the past, surges, but never anything like this and never during a pandemic. There are serious risks to our law enforcement officials, our nongovernmental associations, and, of course, to the migrants themselves.

Something needs to be done now before the crisis grows even larger. If you are cooking dinner for your family and the food in the oven catches on fire, are you going to keep stirring the pot on the stove? Are you going to set the table or call your kids to come downstairs for dinner? No. You are going to put the fire out first. That is what we need to do now. Before we can even have those necessary conversations about immigration reform, we need to put the fire out and put it out now.

Once we have taken action on the border crisis, I hope we can have serious, bipartisan discussions about immigration reform and finally provide DACA recipients the certainty they deserve, but that can't happen until the crisis on the border is addressed.

Like I said, I am disappointed that the President didn't address this in his speech last evening. I was hoping he would be willing to work with a bipartisan group of Senators and Congressmen who are eager to take action.

Last week, Senator SINEMA from Arizona and I introduced the Bipartisan Border Solutions Act, a straightforward and commonsense way to address this crisis. The bill already has the support of Members from both parties and in both Chambers, as well as a number of respected organizations. We would be glad to gain the support of the administration as well. But you can't solve a problem until you first acknowledge that you have a problem, and we have a problem with the crisis on the border.

This is not going to get any better. We know that much of this migration is seasonal, and so the high numbers—

more than 300,000 that we have seen so far this year—are going to translate into even more numbers next month and next month and next. So the time to deal with this is now, but, like I said, until the administration acknowledges that there is a problem and that we need to work on it together, it is going to get nothing but worse.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, as I begin my remarks today, I first want to express my appreciation to Senator TIM SCOTT for the address that he gave last night following the joint address to Congress by the President.

I so appreciated the remarks that he made, how he reminded us of the importance of common sense and using that common sense to find common ground as we look to address the issues that affect our Nation, the issues that affect Tennesseans. That is such a timely reminder. I likewise appreciated his comments about the importance of reconciliation, one to another, and the importance of redemption as we, each and every one, go about our work each day, as we seek to help our Nation become a more perfect Union. Timely reminders—well done and greatly appreciated by many Tennesseans and individuals who have reached out to say: I was so touched by listening to TIM SCOTT and his remarks.

Many of our Tennesseans have also expressed their concern with some of the provisions that were there in President Biden's address.

They felt as if this was something that kind of doubled down on decades of failed policies that were seeking to prioritize dependence on a welfare State overlooking at families and communities but pushing that dependence on a welfare state.

There really wasn't anything groundbreaking that was there in the remarks, apart from the pricetag, which is eye-popping, and really will take your breath away when you stop and think about it. And for a long time, my Democratic colleagues have championed programs that treat people like individual clients instead of families and communities.

So, here we are, and we are staring down the Biden doctrine, and it is a commitment to spending trillions and trillions of dollars—trillions of dollars. We are talking about \$6 trillion since January 20. This is astounding. And those dollars are being spent to incentivize dependence on the Federal Government to supplant the nuclear family with the Federal Government and to centralize control here in Washington, DC.

If you don't believe me, just take a little peek at what the Biden administration has done during their first 100 days. They started with a \$1.9 trillion blue-State payday that bailed Democrat-run cities out of the fiscal holes that they had made for themselves.

Earlier this month, they introduced a \$2.3 trillion—yes, trillion with a “t”—trillion-dollar infrastructure boondoggle that would force families and businesses to rely on a government handout to comply with the mandates pulled directly from the Green New Deal.

They even rolled out a total election overhaul that blatantly violates the Constitution by removing all control from the States and placing it right here in Washington, DC—removing from your local election commission, removing from your State legislature, and sending the authority to handle these elections to Washington, DC.

And last night, during his address to a joint session of Congress, President Biden offered a few details on his American Families Plan, which, by all estimates—you got it, another big pricetag—\$1.8 trillion.

The numbers really are staggering. Not counting the cost of S. 1, these efforts will cost the American people a combined \$6 trillion. And we haven't even factored in annual appropriations, which will add over \$1 trillion to that grand total.

Let's put these numbers in context. We saw the national debt jump from \$10.6 trillion. Now, that is the number where it was when President George Bush left office, \$10.6 trillion. That is all the debt—every penny of Federal debt—that had accumulated from George Washington to George Bush.

So \$10.6 trillion, that is the debt total when President Obama took office. And then with the Obama-Biden administration, that debt nearly doubled. When President Obama left office—that is right, you are looking over that 8-year period of time of right at doubling that debt.

In his first 2 years in office, deficits increased so much that Admiral Mullen—then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 2010—declared the national debt to be the Nation's top national security threat, our Nation's debt. President Biden is on track to smash those records.

Bear in mind these numbers: George Washington to George Bush, \$10.6 trillion. It nearly doubles as you have the Obama-Biden administration, and now since January 20, we are talking about \$6 trillion.

If your local city commission were spending money at this rate, you would be at city hall banging down the doors. But my Democratic colleagues are all on board, even though what they have actually put on paper is nothing but a series of wish lists they have wanted to start checking off since 2010.

But those lists have a very important purpose. They curated them with so-called free programs and big promises that will serve two purposes: first, to persuade people to cede authority over their lives, families, businesses; and, second, to totally centralize power here in Washington, DC.

It is truly stunning, truly stunning what my Democratic colleagues have

allowed themselves to propose. Last night, the President of the United States directly addressed the American people and said: Don't think, just give us control.

When he unveiled the American Families Plan, he spent a great deal of time on all of the wish list programs he hopes will eventually be sent to his desk for his signature but not a lot of time on how he plans to pay for these programs.

I think it is important to state for the record that every program President Biden asked us to endorse has a cost. The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget estimates that the American Families Plan alone—this one program—will result in a deficit impact of \$300 billion over a decade—massive costs.

President Biden claimed he can pay for all of this with taxes. He said:

It's time for corporate America and the wealthiest 1% to pay their fair share.

And then he said that 55 of the Nation's biggest corporations made \$40 billion in profits that can and should be taxed.

But here is the problem: Even if they were taxed 100 percent of their \$40 billion in profits, that would pay for less than 1 percent of this administration's proposed \$7 trillion in total spending. And yet how did the President describe these programs? Universal pre-K, universal, free community college—free.

Look at this pricetag. Families won't have to spend a dime, won't have to spend a dime on childcare. The American Families Plan will put money in your pocket.

Now, as I said, universal, free—you won't have to spend a dime; it is going to put money in your pocket. It is taken care of. Don't think. Just take the deal. Do your part.

Where does this money come from? Every single penny that comes into the Federal Treasury comes from the pocket of a U.S. taxpayer. That is where this money comes from. And the debt, that is going to be there for our children and our grandchildren that have to sort it out long after these programs have outlived their usefulness, long after many of us are gone.

We used to talk about spending millions and billions, and now it is trillions. And, to me, I think about my grandkids, and I think about the fact that they haven't earned a paycheck yet. But you know what? With all of this spending this year, they now have \$80,000 of U.S. Federal debt that is their responsibility.

And I think it is instructive for us to look at who is it that actually holds this debt. The biggest holder of our debt—someone goes to market and buys our debt, China. You also have OPEC, the cartel, in the top holders of our debt.

My colleagues, this is an issue—not millions, not billions. This is something—this needs our best efforts and our best attention.

Since his inauguration, President Biden spent a lot of time talking about

unity. At the same time, he talks about eliminating the filibuster and passing legislation to entrench Democratic incumbents at the expense of voters. It is a power grab.

He supported using the budget reconciliation process to ram his \$1.9 billion spending package through, and it appears he may do so again to pass the rest of the multitrillion-dollar agenda.

Last night's speech could have been an opportunity for him to seek common ground with congressional Republicans. Much of the success of our country has had with the COVID vaccination is due, in large part, to Operation Warp Speed and previous administrations, as well as bipartisan efforts in Congress. There was no mention of that.

When the country was thrown into the COVID pandemic, Congress and President Trump passed the CARES Act, bipartisan, and four other major bipartisan COVID relief bills—no mention of that.

If we are going to heal, the Biden administration must recognize the achievements of administrations past and the serious contributions that congressional Republicans are ready and willing to make.

For months now, I have come to the floor to ask my Democratic colleagues to take a breath, to take away the wish lists, and to focus on what the American people need—focus on their needs.

The American people—when I am talking to Tennesseans, you know what they would like? They would like a little bit more money left at the end of their month and not too much month left at the end of their money.

They want the hope that comes from opportunity, not the tangles of an eternal safety net. They are independent. They want a system that will, indeed, help them build their lives back better, as our President would like to say, but all that the White House has to offer is a plan that will flatten and rebuild the country and the broken image of failed policies that people have tried, and they just didn't work.

What they did do: destroyed our healthcare system, pushed tuition at public colleges and universities out of reach for low-income students, and they currently levy massive tax penalties against working-class families who depend on each other and not the Federal Government.

The Biden administration has set some lofty goals for itself. And I have to admit, the end results look pretty tempting on paper; that is, if you don't look too close.

There is a reason why the President has offered so few details about how his ideas would work in practice, and it is because he knows, without a doubt, that if this shows the true cost of signing on the dotted line that the people would not be with him in this effort.

Throughout the pandemic, the American people kept each other safe and took care of their friends and neigh-

bors. When I talk to Tennesseans about church, I can tell what they really have as their values: faith, family, freedom, hope, opportunity. They understand that defending one of those virtues means defending them all for everybody. But they also understand the danger in allowing the government to step in and replace family and community with a bloated welfare state. They know it is dangerous to replace potential with sameness and to supplant community with collectivism.

That is exactly what the Biden administration put on the table last night in very vague, poll-tested language that really said nothing but threatened unprecedented levels of government control. But I suppose from their perspective, you don't need details when all you are really asking your fellow countrymen to do is to submit; just take the deal.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. Kaine. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and 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 SCOTT MAGERS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, one family in Southcentral Kentucky has waited more than 70 years to give their hero a proper tribute. Last year, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, DPAA, identified the remains of Navy Seaman 2nd Class Howard "Scott" Magers from Barren County. Over Memorial Day weekend, a grateful nation will honor this Kentuckian's sacrifice as he finally comes home. I would like to take a moment today to add my personal gratitude for Scott's service and his family's sacrifice.

Those who knew Scott remembered a soft-spoken young man with a kind heart and a winning smile. In January 1941, he enlisted in the Navy at the age of 17. Like millions of other men and women of the "greatest generation," Scott put his own ambitions on pause to defend the country he loved. After completing his training and making one trip home to Kentucky before his 18th birthday, Scott was stationed aboard the USS *Oklahoma* at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

On that Sunday morning, the Japanese forces rained bombs down on unsuspecting American sailors. Torpedoes pummeled the *Oklahoma*, tearing open her hull and igniting an inferno inside. Within minutes, the massive ship capsized, and more than 400 of its crew plunged into the water below.