Madam President, I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 61.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Daniel I. Werfel, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Internal Revenue for the term expiring November 12, 2027.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 61, Daniel I. Werfel, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Internal Revenue for the term expiring November 12, 2027.

Charles E. Schumer, Ron Wyden, Catherine Cortez Masto, Richard J. Durbin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Sherrod Brown, Margaret Wood Hassan, Raphael G. Warnock, Gary C. Peters, Jack Reed, Brian Schatz, Tina Smith, Ben Ray Luján, Elizabeth Warren, Christopher A. Coons, Martin Heinrich, Christopher Murphy, Tammy Baldwin.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call for the cloture motion filed today, March 6, be waived.

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

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, so, this Thursday, President Biden will release the third budget proposal of his Presidency, one of the most important chances all year to emphasize the contrast between Democrats' and Republicans' vision for the country.

When Americans see President Biden's budget proposal and compare it to the nasty plans coming from Republicans, the contrast will be glaring and unmistakable.

First, President Biden's budget will focus on creating opportunity for average Americans. He will keep his promise not to raise taxes for anyone making less than $400,000 a year. He will show how Democrats will keep Medicare solvent for another two decades. And he will lay out a plan—a realistic, serious plan—for lowering the deficit by $2 trillion over the next 10 years.

Republicans love to talk about cutting the deficit, but Democrats have actually done it. The Inflation Reduction Act lowered the deficit by hundreds of billions of dollars, and we cut the deficit while also cutting prescription drug costs and expanding tax credits for millions of middle-class families.

Now, compare President Biden's budget to the nasty vision laid out by our Republican friends. While the President's budget will keep taxes and costs low for the vast majority of families, Republicans went on record wanting to raise taxes by 30 percent for millions of Americans through their recent national sales tax proposal.

While the President promised no new taxes for people making under $400,000, the very first bill House Republicans passed helped rich tax cheats get away with paying little or nothing in taxes. And while President Biden and Democrats have been clear that Social Security and Medicare are not on the table, Republicans have proposed raising the retirement age and privatizing certain elements of Medicare. The result: fewer benefits for retirees, higher premiums for Medicare beneficiaries.

We cannot overlook the threat Republicans also pose to Medicaid, which tens of millions of middle-class Americans rely on to ease the burden of paying for nursing homes and assisted living. Democrats want to preserve and strengthen Medicaid, but Republican proposals would cut Medicaid by $2.2 trillion and end coverage for millions of Americans. That average middle-class family—let's say they are 40, 50 years old, and they are worried about paying for the kids' college, but they also have a parent in a nursing home. Right now, Medicaid would pay for it if the parent doesn't have the resources. With these cuts, that burden will fall on tens of millions of American families in the prime of life.

Finally, the President will make clear that in order to strengthen Social Security and Medicare and to lower the deficit responsibly, the ultrarich must pay their fair share. There is no—no—conceivable scenario where wealthy CEOs should ever pay a lower rate than nurses and teachers and firefighters, but that is precisely how Republicans preferred it when they cut taxes for the ultrarich under Donald Trump.

It is as if Republicans care more about making sure the rich stay rich than they do about building ladders to the middle class, than they do about keeping middle-class people in that position.

Now, when President Biden called out Republicans for targeting Social Security and Medicare, they erupted with feigned outrage during his State of the Union. But, to this day, Speaker MCCARTHY and House Republican leadership have failed to present their own plan to the American people.

Speaker MCCARTHY, it is now March 6. Where is your plan? Speaker McCarthy, where is your plan? The President is about to release his budget. Are you going to release yours anytime soon? Enough with the dodging. Enough with the excuses. Show us your plan, and then show us how it is going to get 218 votes on your side of the aisle.

Americans deserve to see for themselves what Democrats and Republicans propose for the future of the country. Republicans should come clean with the American people about what cuts they are pushing and explain how those cuts will cause unnecessary pain for millions of Americans across the country.

RAIL SAFETY

Madam President, now on rail safety, it is a busy time for the Senate, as we get to the bottom of what went wrong last month in East Palestine.

Last week, my colleagues Senator BROWN, a Democrat, and Senator VANCE, a Republican, introduced the bipartisan Railway Safety Act of 2023. I promise to work with them and with colleagues on both sides to push this bill forward.

This Thursday, the Environment and Public Works Committee, under the able leadership of Chairman CARPER, will also hear from Norfolk Southern's CEO Alan Shaw. I expect a candid, honest, clear-eyed discussion about how we can prevent another East Palestine in the future. And while I am glad that Norfolk Southern's CEO is testifying, we cannot have an open debate, an honest debate, in Congress about rail safety unless Republicans acknowledge how they spent years opposing safety rules intended to prevent accidents similar to the one in Ohio.

The story of rail safety deregulation over the last decade has been a disturbing tale of Republicans placing profits over people and currying favor with the rail lobby, all at the expense of workers' and families' safety.

As far back as the Obama administration, Republicans pushed numerous bills to weaken environmental standards, delay safety upgrades, and even prohibit—prohibit—Federal funding for Amtrak.

Under President Trump's watch, it became easier to transport flammable liquids and hazardous materials without proper oversight. Under President Trump's watch, it also became easier to cut back on staffing requirements while operating a train. And it was the Trump administration that killed proposals to expand electronic brake requirements across the industry. The reason for that delay? The Trump administration thought it was ''not economically justified.''

You can't come up with a better slogan for Republicans' attitude toward rail safety than this: not economically