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Senate

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, our shelter in the time of storm, use the Members of this body to accomplish Your will, as they permit honesty to guide them. Lord, strengthen them to never abandon the struggle, and inspire them to endure to the end. Help them to press forward to the goal of Your ideal for humanity. May they refuse to take the easy path as they strive to stay on the right road. Remind them that perspiration is usually the price for accomplishing laudable goals and that without the cross, there is rarely a crown. Lord, keep and sustain our lawmakers by Your grace.

We pray in Your marvelous Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RELATING TO "ENERGY CONSERVATION PROGRAM: ENERGY CONSERVATION STANDARDS FOR CONSUMER GAS-FIRED INSTANTANEOUS WATER HEATERS"

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.J. Res. 20, and the clerk will now report the joint resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 20) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Energy relating to "Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for Consumer Gas-fired Instantaneous Water Heaters".

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

FIRST 100 DAYS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, Saturday will mark 100 days of the 119th Congress and the Republican majority here in the Senate. It has been a very productive 100 days. We have had 14 weeks of the new Congress, and the Senate has been in session and voting for 13 of those 14 weeks. We had the longest continuous in-session work period in 15 years—10 weeks—and yesterday, we took our 200th vote. That is more votes at this point in a new Congress since at least the Reagan era.

What do we have to show for it? Well, Mr. President, we have confirmed the President's Cabinet at the fastest pace in more than 20 years, and as of this week, we have more than 50 total confirmations. Confirming nominees is a big focus of any new Congress with a

newly elected President, and we are building out the President's administration at a brisk pace.

But that is far from the only thing we have done. We passed Senator BRITT's Laken Riley Act—the first bipartisan border bill since 2006—which the President signed into law on January 29. This legislation, which incorporated amendments by Senators CORNYN, ERNST, and BUDD, ensures that illegal immigrants who steal, assault a law enforcement officer, or kill or seriously injure another person are detained instead of being allowed back on the street.

We also passed Senator GRASSLEY and Senator CASSIDY's HALT Fentanyl Act by an even stronger bipartisan margin, to provide law enforcement with critical tools to combat this deadly disease.

We considered other important bills: Senator TUBERVILLE's legislation to protect women's sports, Senator BANKS and Senator LANKFORD's legislation to protect babies born alive after botched abortions, and Senator COTTON's ICC sanctions bill. All of those were, unfortunately, filibustered by our Democrat colleagues.

That is not all. We have also passed six Congressional Review Act resolutions—and plan to pass a seventh today—to repeal burdensome Biden administration regulations, thanks to the effort of, among others, Senators HOEVEN, CRUZ, KENNEDY, RICKETTS, and TIM SCOTT.

Finally, we considered not one but two budget resolutions to provide the framework for a permanent extension of the 2017 tax relief and a transformational investment in our border, energy, and national security. I am proud of the role the Senate's two resolutions have played in advancing negotiations as we head toward a final bill.

As I have said before, my philosophy of leadership comes from my dad. He was a basketball coach at our high school, and he had some very strong

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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opinions about the right way to play. Sports, to him, was not about personal glory; it was about elevating the team. That is an attitude I have tried to bring to every leadership position I have held.

When Republican Senators trusted me with the role of majority leader last November, I promised to empower my colleagues and to open up the Senate, and I am proud that we have been making progress toward that goal.

We have honored the commitment to return to regular order and have brought multiple bills to the floor via the committee process, where Members of both parties have a chance to amend and improve legislation. We have created additional opportunities for Members to draw attention to their priorities and manage their bills on the floor. We have done substantial work to cut down vote times to make the process more efficient and free Members up for the other work they have to do.

I have also been working to ensure that the lines of communication are open at all levels—at the Member level, at the staff level, between the House and the Senate, and between the Senate and the White House. I regularly chat with the President and with Speaker JOHNSON so we can ensure that the House, Senate, and White House are all on the same page and doing everything we can to advance our shared goals.

When we return from Easter, we will continue to have a packed agenda: more nominations to confirm, more burdensome Biden regulations to repeal, a tax bill and border, energy, and national security bill to continue drafting.

Committees are currently working on legislation that will come to the floor in the coming weeks and months.

Of course, appropriations season is almost upon us, and I remain committed to considering as many appropriations bills as possible under regular order. When the Appropriations Committee reports a bill, I intend to bring that bill to the floor for debate. That will require cooperation from Democrats. But I hope—I truly hope—that my Democrat colleagues will recognize that the right way to fund the government is to bring individual appropriations bills through the committee process and then consider them on the Senate floor.

It has been a busy 100 days in the U.S. Senate, and I am looking forward to many more.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BARASSO). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

TARIFFS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, this morning, I will take a little more than the usual time because I want to review what happened, over the past 8 days, with Trump's tariff tax so that it can be preserved in the RECORD and so that we as a nation can try to process the reckless, unnecessary damage President Trump has created.

The past 8 days have been an absolute embarrassment for President Trump and for everyone who truly cares about this country. During these 8 days, the world saw the President of the United States reveal his total lack of understanding of international trade, macro- and microeconomics, and foreign relations. The world saw the American President issue a tariff ultimatum so ill-conceived and so flawed that it was mocked from here to the Heard and McDonald Islands.

This whole episode is so ridiculous that even the writers of "Veep" and "House of Cards" would have shredded their drafts. Yet it was real. It had real effects, lasting effects on real people.

Donald Trump's tariff fiasco caused real damage to the confidence other nations have in America. It had real effects on the uncertainty we feel every day that Donald Trump sits in the Oval Office. It had real effects on people's retirements.

Let's start with his announcement on April 2 that that would be "Liberation Day," a day of massive worldwide tariffs. Rather than providing a coherent explanation for such a substantial policy change, the stated justification for this massive tariff application varied, depending on the moment or who the administration spokesperson was. Depending on the day, President Trump claimed that tariffs would either balance the budget, enable the elimination of the income tax, or bring manufacturing jobs back to the United States.

While Peter Navarro gave full-throated support to all three of those goals, most of the rest of the administration ignored the first two goals and focused on bringing manufacturing jobs back to the United States—a worthy goal; one the Democrats, including myself, have been advocating for decades.

However, even administration officials couldn't get on the same page. While Navarro and Secretary Bessent were talking about the return of jobs, Secretary Lutnick was espousing that manufacturing would be coming back but that it would be automated, he said. So are we bringing manufacturing jobs back or displacing them with machines?

It is clear, Mr. President, as April 2 approached, no one—not even the most devoted Trump apologist, except maybe only Ron Vara—believed the President had an actual plan. Nevertheless, he persisted, and on April 2, President Trump, against all sem-

blance of common sense, announced tariffs beyond what even the most isolationist Republican could have envisioned.

The President made some outlandish claims, and he held up a chart with a lot of numbers on it. And his claims and those numbers were a surprise to pretty much everyone—everyone—who understands the language, the theory, and the mathematics of trade.

Putting aside the idiotic tariffs applied to penguins who produce nothing but guano and baby penguins and consume little more than krill and fish and putting aside tariffs on countries that make products Americans crave but lack the purchasing power to buy our products in return, we all quickly realized that the numbers on Donald Trump's chart were so nonsensical that it took some of the world's greatest economic minds to reverse engineer it to determine the formula. And yet, in perfect Trumpian fashion, his administration released the "actual" formula and the assumptions behind the chart.

Again, it quickly became clear that he based his entire tariff scheme on a formula so flawed, so economically incoherent that he had to insert some random Greek letters and assign them phony values just to make it look like something out of "A Beautiful Mind." But instead of a stroke of genius, what we got was gibberish—not genius but gibberish.

Remember back in 2019, when Hurricane Dorian was approaching Florida and President Trump used a Sharpie to alter a NOAA map to try and cover for his mistake? Well, this phony formula is the 2025 reincarnation of Sharpiegate, except the economic consequences of this fraud will affect millions and millions of Americans.

I won't stand up here and say I oppose all tariffs. I don't. I appreciate my supporters on Twitter reminding everyone that I have long championed tough trade policies on China, going back to my early days in the Senate.

But I and the American people oppose a whimsical, nonsensical approach to international trade, especially one that so clearly will increase costs on American families. It is one thing to target tariffs on bad actors like China; that makes sense.

But to raise tariffs on allies such as Canada and Israel? Everyone knows that makes no sense.

To raise tariffs on random islands as the Falklands, Heard and McDonald, and Svalbard? Everyone knows that makes no sense.

To raise tariffs on countries like Madagascar that import little from us but produce products wanted by millions of Americans? Everyone knows that makes no sense.

And yet he persisted. Trump persisted, and the world's financial markets melted down on Thursday and Friday.

Now, that meltdown may not have mattered to President Trump, but it certainly mattered to millions of

Americans. While the big financial players can hedge against an ignorant, erratic President, everyday Americans who have their hard-earned nest eggs in pension funds, IRAs, and 529 accounts to help pay for their kids' college tuition don't have that luxury. While the President and his family can create new meme coins and sell cheap made-in-China swag, so that bad actors and sycophants can funnel the money, most Americans don't have that luxury.

No, Mr. President, most Americans are living paycheck to paycheck. If they are lucky, they put a little away each month for retirement or college savings. Some of them keep that money in interest-bearing accounts for the stability. Their savings are probably doing OK, but costs are going up, so that they may have to dip into those savings. The President let them down.

Some Americans put that money in mutual funds that depend on stability and predictability. The President let them down as well.

Of course, some Americans have no exposure to the stock market. Their only hope for retirement is Social Security, which congressional Republicans want to gut, and Elon Musk calls a Ponzi scheme. But the President also let them down because they may not be exposed, but their employer probably is, as are their neighborhood grocer and hardware store, and they will be affected if any prices rise.

When the financial markets closed on Friday with one of the biggest drops in history, President Trump was golfing and dining with his Saudi friends. On Saturday, while the Nation was stressing over their financial instability, the official White House Press Office gleefully announced that the President would, on Sunday, compete in his club's golf championship. This was the Trump version of "Let them eat cake"—"Let them eat cake."

Then on Sunday, after a week of uncertainty, a weekend of stress, while small business owners, retirees, and young families across the country were sitting at their kitchen tables trying to figure out how they were going to handle this dramatic increase in costs, what was the President doing? He was, of course, still golfing. And to the surprise of no one, except for maybe the actual tournament winner, President Trump tied for his own club championship, a remarkable achievement, to be sure. In fact, so great is that achievement that, if the President would make public his scorecard, I would gladly enter it into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and ask for its preservation at the National Archives, though I am sure his caddy would be reluctant to testify under oath. I know the President likes to talk about his handicap.

Over the weekend, his administration tried to cover up for his indifference by claiming that "more than 50 countries" had reached out to start negotiations. That claim may have temporarily calmed the futures market, but

its unbelievability certainly harmed the White House economic adviser Kevin Hassett's credibility.

Adding to the uncertainty and lack of faith was the incoherence within the administration that was in full public effect over the weekend.

In between golf swings, the President found time to post:

WE WILL WIN. HANG TOUGH, it won't be easy.

Meanwhile, America's de facto President, Elon Musk, told a globalist conference in Italy he wanted a "zero-tariff situation" between the United States and Europe. That aspiration was quickly and directly rebutted by the tariff architect, Peter Navarro, which led to a public spat the likes of which the Presidency has rarely seen.

On Monday, the markets started low but quickly skyrocketed because some "verified" Trump Twitter account announced that an administration official said Trump would pause tariffs for 90 days. The world and the markets rejoiced, but the administration quickly refuted that assertion, and the markets fluctuated downward.

Tuesday started with great optimism and a quick market rise, but China's retaliation and the rumors of a European equivalent turned the rally bearish, which brings us to yesterday, Wednesday, April 9.

Mr. President, history will likely record this day as America's actual "Liberation Day" because it is the day that President Trump backed down—backed down. Of course, as with anything Trump does, his backing down created a few private winners and several public losers. We may never discern who the private winners are, but we do know that, at 9:37 a.m., President Trump posted, in all capital letters:

THIS IS A GREAT TIME TO BUY!!! DJT—Donald J. Trump.

What exactly was the purpose of this post? Why did he feel the need to add his initials to this particular post? Was it a signal to his friends and family that he was going to pause the tariffs so they should buy low knowing the market would boom? Was this another "stand back and stand by?" We may never know. We may never know. But we need to find out, and it must be investigated.

Now, we certainly know who the losers are. The losers are the millions of Americans who tried to protect their positions and sold assets during the downturn. They were let down by President Trump. The losers are the administration officials who tried their level best to cover for President Trump's instability by spinning to the media only to have the President undercut their credibility.

We shouldn't be surprised by this. We all lived through the first Trump Presidency, after which he even admitted he hired bad people; but here, in his second term, the effort that President Trump puts into destroying the credi-

bility of his staff is utterly incomprehensible.

To paraphrase a former Trump official: People think Trump is playing 3D chess, but most of the time, the staff is just trying to keep him from eating the pieces.

That is what happened this week. Trump's sycophants—FOX News and Republican Senators—are all used to this game. They know the President is dead wrong; that he is not remotely a very stable genius. Yet none of them want to tell the emperor that he has no clothes.

Secretary Lutnick's credibility is shot because of his full-on defense of this tariff scheme, followed by his admission that it wouldn't result in American jobs because automation would take over.

Secretary Bessent's credibility is shot because of his public attempts to defend the President's ever-changing whims. He spent the weekend and the week saying the administration doesn't want deals; that we are bringing manufacturing back; that we aren't pausing. As recently as yesterday, he made the Orwellian claim that Main Street would benefit from this tariff scheme. But then, today, his full humiliation was complete as he tweeted after the President backed down:

No one creates leverage for himself like @POTUS.

Give me a break.

The President even undercut his Trade Representative during a congressional hearing. Jamieson Greer spent hours defending the President's tariff policy only to learn of the President's backtracking while he was sitting at the witness stand.

Then, after hours of administration officials claiming that this wasn't a backtrack and that it was the plan all along, President Trump goes to the mics and undercuts his team by saying he caved because he was watching the bond markets, and people were getting nervous. With Trump, obedience begets humiliation.

So now, Mr. President, you and 330 million of your fellow Americans and countries across the planet are asking: Where are we?

Sadly, no one knows, not even President Trump. Some proposed tariffs have been reduced. Some have not. Our neighbors in Canada and Mexico are asking how this applies to them, and they can't get straight answers. The President himself has leaned into the uncertainty, offering that he may give breaks to certain companies—we should assume those that are owned by his family and his friends. That is how this administration rolls.

Asked yesterday about potential tariff reprieves for companies, he replied—this is President Trump:

There have been some that have been hit hard . . . There are some that by the nature of the company get hit a little bit harder and we'll take a look at that.

So, as we look back on this week of self-made chaos and even destruction,

we have to ask: What was the purpose of this exercise? What was the purpose of this exercise?

Was it, as President Trump originally said, to force other countries to pay enough tariffs so the United States could eliminate the income tax? No. Trump backed off that.

Was it, as President Trump said later, to retaliate against countries that were unfair to us? No. That was never true, but even if it were, Trump backed off that.

Was it, as some sycophants and Cabinet Secretaries have claimed, some 4D chess move to call China's bluff? No. Everyone knows that isn't true. This was not a week of 3D chess, 4D chess, or even checkers.

Again, to paraphrase a former Trump official: People think Trump is playing 3D chess, but most of the time, the staff is just trying to keep him from eating the pieces.

President Trump is a guy who lights the house on fire, calls 9-1-1, and then his MAGA sycophants and Republican Senators hit the airwaves and take to social media to laud him for putting out the fire.

The President did real harm—real harm—to America and Americans over the last week, and Senate Republicans stood by and cheered. Senate Democrats will do everything we can to help minimize the damage.

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.

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

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

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I just heard my colleague—the previous majority and now minority leader, the senior Senator from New York—talk about a number of things that just reflect on the fact of why he is now the minority leader instead of the majority leader. It is because of the elections in November, and it was an election that was won by Republicans because the previous administration had been the administration of high prices and open borders. So I would like to address those two things today and show why the American people made the right decision in November when they were focused on high prices and an open border.

All I need to do is to turn to a headline this morning that talks about how “inflation cooled,” how inflation is lower than expected for this past month.

The Washington Post headline, “Inflation cooled significantly in March.”

The Axios headlines, “Consumer prices fall in March.”

Then CNN, this morning, noted that consumer prices, month over month, dropped for the first time since COVID.

Republicans promised to get America back on track.

Then, when it comes to the border, remember the headline from the past, “Migrant crossings soar to near-record [high] levels”? That was by CBS News, on September 21, 2024, about 6 weeks prior to the election.

Record-high border crossings were a reality in Joe Biden's final months in the White House. Biden then had about 7,000 illegal immigrants flooding across the southern border each and every day—7,000 a day from San Diego, CA, all the way to my home State, to Sheridan, WY. Every city in America was a border State. Communities were overrun and overwhelmed.

Let's fast-forward to today where we see the inflation numbers looking good—down, improved—since the first time since COVID.

Let's take a look at the border today. With President Trump in charge, things have changed dramatically. Last month—the entire month—illegal border crossings dropped to 7,000—7,000 for the month. That is the lowest monthly total in decades. So we went from 7,000 illegal immigrants a day under Joe Biden to 7,000 illegal immigrants for the entire month of March.

This turnaround isn't luck; it is leadership—and there is a big difference. Joe Biden recklessly dismantled our border security. In his first 100 days in office, he signed 94 Executive actions. That threw open our borders. President Trump has restored decisive enforcement in his first 100 days. Illegal border crossings have dropped by 94 percent. It is dramatic.

The New York Post hailed this as a “stunning new low” in border crossings.

ABC News said:

Southwest border crossings for March [were the] lowest in history.

The Washington Post wondered:

[Whatever] happened to the border crisis?

Well, let me tell you what happened.

This is what happens when a President stops coddling the criminals. This is what happens when a President starts enforcing the law. The contrast is undeniable. The previous administration surrendered. The current administration delivered what the American people wanted. Cartel killers, drug dealers, murderers, and rapists are getting hauled in and thrown out by the thousands. Immigration and Customs Enforcement reports that there have been over 100,000 deportations in 80 days. That is about progress. Those are promises kept. Yet the fight is just beginning. Last week, a college student was killed by an illegal immigrant in a hit-and-run. The student's name was Nate Baker. Nate attended the University of South Carolina. He had just turned 21 years old 2 weeks before.

This is a death that was preventable. His killer has been identified and was identified by Immigration and Customs Enforcement over the last 5 years. His killer is one of more than 600,000 illegal

immigrant criminals still in our country. These are the very illegal immigrants who President Trump and his team are deporting. Deaths like Nate's, the drug overdoses, the families who have lost loved ones—those are real human costs to American citizens as a result of open borders. Open borders aren't compassionate as Democrat after Democrat continues to claim and as NANCY PELOSI talks about. They are catastrophic. Grieving families like Nate's deserve justice, not half measures. Public safety demands we deport illegal criminals, not coddle them.

This is why Senate Republicans have taken action. On Saturday, we passed a budget roadmap for a safer, more prosperous nation. It includes \$175 billion in border funding. It puts us on a path to finish the wall. It boosts the Border Patrol. It boosts Immigration and Customs Enforcement staffing. It provides for much greater detention capacity for the lawbreakers. Remember, those are the lawbreakers Joe Biden openly invited into our country.

President Trump, Secretary Kristi Noem, and Border Czar Tom Homan say this budget is the muscle that they need to be able to complete the job. I agree with them—they are right—and that is what we are ready to deliver.

When it came to the vote on the Senate floor—on this very floor—Senate Democrats voted unanimously against border security. One after another after another, as their names were called, voted no. They weren't going to secure the border. They weren't interested. Leave it wide open. Continue to invite in the criminal cartels and the drug dealers. For 4 years, Senate Democrats welcomed open border policies that left our communities vulnerable, and Democrats in this body, last week, still supported those reckless, irresponsible policies of open borders.

Republicans offered solutions, not the Democrats, who offered resistance to what we were doing to secure the border. Americans saw the difference last November, and they voted that way. They chose strength and security over crime and chaos. That is what the American people want—strength and security. They want safe communities. The numbers speak for themselves—7,000 illegal immigrants per day under Joe Biden last year to 7,000 a month now. It is a consequential difference. It is a difference that will save American lives.

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.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO MEGHAN TAIRA

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on July 16, 2007—a while back—I hired a legislative assistant to handle our healthcare and education policy.

I didn't know it then, but this new member of my team, this native of Hawaii who came to work for a Senator from New York—she did live in New York for a while and went to high school there. I always tease her about the high school she went to, Brearley—would, in time, become my legislative director.

She would stay with my team not just for years but for almost two decades—two decades. She would become one of the most talented, most effective, and most trusted advisers I ever, ever had—and I have had a lot of good ones—this person, of course, who is sitting next to me right here, Meghan Taira, the best legislative guru I could have ever asked for, the best legislative director in the business. That says a lot because there have been a lot of good ones there too.

Tomorrow, after 18 wonderful years, Meghan will move on from her time in the Senate. She sat in this chair many times directing me, helping the Senate move forward. This will be her last time sitting in that chair, and we are the lesser for it because she is so great.

We won't dwell on the goodbyes—that is too bittersweet—and instead we will all say thank you to Meghan Taira.

Thank you for 18 wonderful years—18, wow, amazing.

Now, Meghan, one thing I will say, and you will shake your head in agreement, thank you for putting up with me—not so easy—every day, all day, on the phone. I will call Meghan at 6 in the morning. I will call her at 11 at night, after she had put her beautiful boy to bed, again and again and again.

Thank you, Meghan, for being the field general of our team, the field general we needed all those years.

Meghan likes astrology. She is a Leo. Like all great Leos, she is a natural leader, fiercely loyal, not just to me but to everyone in her office. She exuded confidence every single day, no matter what problem lay before us. I would see these problems, and I would say: Oh, my God, how are we ever going to solve that? She would walk in, have her solution, and poof, it was solved.

She was by my side in some of the most pivotal moments of my time in this Chamber. Meghan counseled me and my whole team as we worked to pass the Affordable Care Act in 2009. It wouldn't have been as good of a law as it was without Meghan Taira.

Seven years later, she was at my side again defending the ACA from repeal, leading our caucus to hold the line. No one thought we would, but we did. It wouldn't have happened without Meghan Taira.

Meghan, if the rest of the world could see you in action like I have, from the way you set the tone each morning to the way you walked all of us through the bills, taking this complicated legislative language and putting it into normal language that we can understand, the way you talk about each vote, each floor fight, the way you are able to pre-

dict—how do I shut this off? This is something Meghan is used to, being interrupted by my cell phone at every moment. Somehow I can't shut the thing off.

Anyway, everyone would think what I think if they could watch you, and that is, thank God there is a Meghan Taira around.

I know there are lots of “Schumerland” alumni watching right now, our great staff team, running along the whole top place there, many more are watching on TV—hello, Schumerland. You are a big, wide group, but almost every one of you have been trained and been made a better staffer by Meghan Taira, and all of Schumerland thinks the same. Maybe they think I am not being superlative enough because on a good day, getting things done in the Senate, they know—our staff knows—it is hard. On hard days, getting things done seems nearly impossible. And then you have the strange days, like we just went through with vote-aramas.

How many vote-aramas have you been through, Meghan? Have you counted?

Thirteen, a lucky number, in this case, for us.

It takes a special talent, a bit of a mad genius to keep nearly 50 U.S. Senators facing in the right direction at 3 a.m. during an amendment vote. But that is typical. We had every Democrat unified on all—what was it, 27 amendments? Maybe more, but at least 27 amendments.

But that is what Meghan has been doing all these years, a compass pointing us in the right direction, the animating spirit of my leadership and legislative team.

Most importantly, it takes a really special person to dedicate so many years of their life—nights, weekends, holidays, life events—to work in the Senate. She and her husband Gerry—they met on my staff; they were a Schumer marriage—are so dedicated to their boy George. It is such a beautiful thing watching him grow up. She was always both busy with George and paying attention to legislation at the same time. I would hear George in the background on many of our calls. One day, maybe he will be a great legislative leader as well. But it takes a special person to dedicate so many nights, so many weekends, so many holidays, and so many life events to work in the Senate.

So, Meghan, you have made your mark on the Senate, on the State of New York, on the United States of America, and even the world. There are, undoubtedly, people living happier and healthier lives on all the continents because Meghan Taira sat in this chair and the chair at her desk in her office for so many years.

Without Meghan, none of our greatest accomplishments of the last 18 years would have been possible: no infrastructure bill, no Chips and Science, no IRA, no gun safety, no marriage equality, and so much more.

Without her, pandemic relief would have been half as strong, half as generous, half as sweeping as it was when America needed the whole thing; it needed boldness. There would be no paid family leave for Federal workers. New York hospitals wouldn't have gotten their lifeline to stay afloat during COVID. Hundreds of thousands of people owe their jobs to Meghan because they would have closed down if we hadn't done that during COVID.

Under Meghan's tenure, we negotiated the first bipartisan budget deal, in 2017, where we finally raised domestic spending to parity with defense. She was 8 months pregnant when she negotiated that bill—superlady, superwoman, superperson, super everything.

Meghan helped orchestrate 13 vote-aramas. I had asked her that before. She saw 2,000 bills—2,000 bills—become law and helped me write and introduce no less than 260 pieces of legislation.

She has done it all. She has seen it all. And I am just so lucky that she did it all as a member of my team.

So, Meghan, you have checked out perhaps more books than anybody from the Library of Congress or more than any staffer I know, but now you will get to check out books that you want to read, not that your job requires you to read, because I know you love to read. And I am happy that George and Gerry will get to see mom around the house more.

Though you are going to move on to greener pastures, Meghan, a piece of you will always dwell in these Chambers, in these halls, in this great institution, and in my heart. We love you, Meghan.

Am I allowed to stand up and hug you on the floor of the Senate? Well, I will.

The great Meghan Taira, America. She served you well.

I yield the floor.

(Applause.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote scheduled for 11 o'clock begin immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON H.J. RES. 20

Under the previous order, the clerk will read the title of the joint resolution for the third time.

The joint resolution was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The joint resolution having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the joint resolution pass?

Mr. DURBIN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN), and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 207 Leg.]

YEAS—53

Banks	Graham	Moreno
Barrasso	Grassley	Murkowski
Blackburn	Hagerty	Ossoff
Boozman	Hawley	Paul
Britt	Hoeben	Ricketts
Budd	Husted	Rounds
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Collins	Justice	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sheehy
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Tillis
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Curtis	McConnell	Warnock
Daines	McCormick	Wicker
Ernst	Moody	Young
Fischer	Moran	

NAYS—44

Alsobrooks	Heinrich	Reed
Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Bennet	Hirono	Schatz
Blumenthal	Kaine	Schiff
Blunt Rochester	Kelly	Schumer
Booker	Kim	Shaheen
Cantwell	King	Slotkin
Coons	Klobuchar	Smith
Cortez Masto	Luján	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Markey	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Warren
Fetterman	Murphy	Welch
Gallego	Murray	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Padilla	Wyden
Hassan	Peters	

NOT VOTING—3

Mullin	Risch	Sanders
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The joint resolution (H.J. Res. 20) was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

WAIVING QUORUM CALL

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the Meador nomination be waived.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

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. 37, Mark Meador, of Virginia, to be a Federal Trade Commissioner for the term of seven years from September 26, 2024.

John Thune, Mike Crapo, Roger Marshall, Shelley Moore Capito, Tommy Tuberville, Jim Justice, James Lankford, John Barrasso, Markwayne Mullin, Tim Sheehy, Mike Rounds, Todd Young, Kevin Cramer, Ted Budd, Roger F. Wicker, Katie Boyd Britt, Eric Schmitt.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Mark Meador, of Virginia, to be a Federal Trade Commissioner for the term of seven years from September 26, 2024, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN), and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 208 Leg.]

YEAS—51

Banks	Fischer	Moody
Barrasso	Graham	Moran
Blackburn	Grassley	Moreno
Boozman	Hagerty	Murkowski
Britt	Hawley	Paul
Budd	Hoeben	Ricketts
Capito	Husted	Rounds
Cassidy	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Collins	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Justice	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Kennedy	Sheehy
Cramer	Lankford	Sullivan
Crapo	Lee	Thune
Cruz	Lummis	Tillis
Curtis	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	McCormick	Young

NAYS—46

Alsobrooks	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Baldwin	Hirono	Schatz
Bennet	Kaine	Schiff
Blumenthal	Kelly	Schumer
Blunt Rochester	Kim	Shaheen
Booker	King	Slotkin
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Smith
Coons	Luján	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Markey	Warner
Duckworth	Merkley	Warnock
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Fetterman	Murray	Welch
Gallego	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Padilla	Wyden
Hassan	Peters	
Heinrich	Reed	

NOT VOTING—3

Mullin	Risch	Sanders
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The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HAGERTY). On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 46.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Mark Meador, of Virginia, to be a Federal Trade Commissioner for the term of seven years from September 26, 2024.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, there has been a lot of wailing and gnashing of teeth in the mainstream media about President Trump's commonsense

immigration enforcement agenda. That is one of the reasons he got elected on November 5. It is because the American people were fed up with open borders and with the 70,000 Americans who died of fentanyl poisoning, not to mention all of the criminals who came across the border along with everybody else. But to listen to some of my Democratic colleagues talk, one would think that Kristi Noem is deporting grandmothers. Well, this couldn't be further from the truth. So I want to take just a minute to correct the record to talk about exactly what is happening.

The Trump administration is rightly carrying on one of the most basic functions of the government, and that is to keep our people safe. This isn't rocket science. This isn't partisan warfare. In order to keep the American people safe, we need to keep criminals and gangs off our streets, and that is exactly what the Trump administration is doing.

The Department of Homeland Security recently announced they made more than 32,000 enforcement arrests in just 50 days—32,000. This is nearly as many arrests as Immigration and Customs Enforcement, otherwise known as ICE, made in the entirety of fiscal year 2024 when border crossings and “got-aways” were at an alltime high. Obviously, this was not a priority for the Biden administration, and we are all living with the consequences.

Of these arrests that have been made under Secretary Noem, nearly half of them have been convicted criminals and others with final orders of deportation. These are people who were either criminals and did not want to appear in front of law enforcement, who were apprehended, or people who claimed asylum or some other legal benefit and lost their cases and are under final orders of deportation but were allowed to remain in the country under the Biden administration. Of these arrests that have been made under Secretary Noem, as I said, nearly half are convicted criminals. One-third of them have pending criminal charges. Nearly 1,200 of them are criminal gang members, and 39 are known as suspected terrorists.

The Department of Homeland Security isn't carrying out this critical mission alone. This is a whole-of-government approach, as it should be. The Department of Justice is partnering with the Department of Homeland Security on a new interagency initiative to crack down on international organized crime, known as Operation Take Back America. International gangs, like MS-13 and Tren de Aragua, have been wreaking havoc, death, and destruction in communities across America.

MS-13, for those who are not familiar with that particular gang, is reputed to be the most dangerous gang on the planet. It is composed primarily of Salvadoran criminal aliens and has 30,000 members around the world, including 10,000 here in the United States. Their