

I traveled down there with a group of colleagues. We had a chance to visit with the Border Patrol in El Paso. We had a chance to visit with Border Patrol in Antelope Wells in New Mexico and Lordsburg in New Mexico. We have had the honor of traveling down into the Rio Grande Valley, down to Brownsville. We had a chance to visit with folks on the frontlines, not just wearing the green uniform of our Border Patrol and those working with the Department of Homeland Security but those who are also providing humanitarian relief.

Those camps in Matamoros that I went to, they still exist. And one of the questions that needs to be asked is, What are these kids going through? What are they thinking about to travel thousands of miles because of the concerns that they have for their own health and well-being? I hope we can have that conversation and solve this problem. So let's find a way to work together.

I have said it before, and I will say it again: We need to go after criminals and felons, not children and families. In truth, I think we can get there.

So as I close, I just say: Let's be a beacon of hope to the most vulnerable. Let's make sure we go after these criminals and felons, wherever they may be, and they feel the full weight of the law. But when it comes to the broken immigration system in America, let's work together to fix it.

Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I appreciate the warm sentiments of the Senator from New Mexico, but the American people can distinguish the difference between talk and action.

The Senator from New Mexico suggested that all Democrats support holding criminals to account. I would suggest the facts are precisely to the contrary.

Just 2 weeks ago, on the floor of this body, we introduced an amendment to provide that \$1,400 government stimulus checks should not go to criminals currently in prison. Every single Senate Democrat voted against that. That amendment failed by one vote. If even one Democrat had said "OK, that is reasonable," it would have passed.

Yesterday, I introduced multiple unanimous consent requests to stop money from going to convicted criminals in prison and to send the money instead to the Crime Victims Fund. A Democrat objected.

I then said: All right, if you don't want to do all criminals, how about murderers? Can we agree, if you were convicted of homicide, if you killed somebody, let's not send you a government check; let's send it to the Crime Victims Fund? The Democrats objected.

I said: All right, how about rapists? The Democrats objected.

I said: How about child molesters? Surely, we can all agree child molesters are not worthy of a \$1,400 taxpayer government bonus given by the Democrats. The Democrats objected.

So with all due respect to my friend from New Mexico, it is not the case that Democrats support holding prisoners to account.

Today, in the Rules Committee, the Democrats are pushing forward an election bill, the Corrupt Politicians Act, which would allow every felon in America who has been released from prison to vote. It would allow murderers to vote, rapists to vote, child molesters to vote. So it is not the case that Democrats are willing to stand up to violent crime.

Now, there are a couple of things that the Senator from New Mexico said that I wrote down. He said the only thing he disagreed with was "the assertion that immigrants are inherently criminal." Well, I challenge anyone watching this exchange to read the transcript.

I am glad he disagrees with that assertion. That assertion never came from my mouth. I am the son of an immigrant who came from Cuba. We are a nation of immigrants. I am not remotely asserting that immigrants are inherently criminal. There is a right way to come, and that is to come legally.

But case law isn't about immigrants generally; it only applies to criminals. It is immigrants that have a criminal conviction, that have an aggravated felony conviction. So when my friend from New Mexico says that we need to focus on felons—and he closed his remarks with the following: "We need to go after criminals and felons, not children and families"—the case law does exactly that.

If the Senator from New Mexico believes the words he said, the next words out of his mouth would not have been "I object." By virtue of objecting, he prevented us from, in a bipartisan way, going after criminals and felons. Case law is targeted at those criminals and felons. It is not targeted at kids; it is targeted at criminals and felons.

I would ask the Senator from New Mexico and every Senate Democrat: What would you say to Kate Steinle's family? I have heard them testify in the Senate Judiciary Committee. I have visited with them personally. If you were looking them in the eyes, what would you say to a system where Kate Steinle's murderer was deported five times—multiple criminal convictions?

I am the original author of Kate's Law. We have voted on this on the Senate floor multiple times. Every time we have voted, every single Democratic Senator has voted against Kate's Law. You don't get to vote against Kate's Law, you don't get to vote against stopping violent criminals from repeatedly entering the country illegally, and then claim you are against violent criminals repeatedly entering the country illegally.

Actions mean more than words, and, unfortunately, the actions of today's Democratic Party are extreme and out of touch with the American people we were elected to represent.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Florida.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 948

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, I rise today to discuss another issue in the Democrats' massive COVID spending bill that we need to fix.

My Democratic colleagues want to keep spending into oblivion, taking our national debt to \$30 trillion. This would be bad enough on its own, but tucked into the bloated spending package were new tax hikes on self-employed individuals.

President Biden and the Democrats didn't talk about it, and they certainly aren't talking about it as they travel the Nation to brag about their bad bill.

Democrats are quietly raising taxes, hoping the American people don't notice. The \$1.9 trillion so-called American Rescue Plan Act, of which less than 10 percent went to actually help fight COVID and 1 percent to vaccines, had several tax increases and burdensome reporting requirements, including one that significantly impacts the gig workers—those who have been severely impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.

Starting in 2022, this bill requires many contractors with gig economy companies like Uber, DoorDash, Airbnb, and Lyft to file 1099 forms when they previously would not have. The new requirement dramatically lowers the annual 1099 reporting threshold from \$20,000 and 200 transactions to just \$600 and eliminates the transaction minimum.

In late February, before the Democrats rushed their spending bill through Congress on a purely partisan basis, a coalition of groups wrote to Speaker PELOSI and Leader SCHUMER, asking that this onerous new provision, which has nothing to do with addressing the coronavirus crisis, be removed or at least reconsidered. The letter was signed by groups such as the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council, the National Asian American Chamber of Commerce, National Association for the Self-Employed, United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the National Association of Women Business Owners.

After receiving such a letter, one would think that Democrats would want to reconsider. Raising taxes and reporting requirements in the midst of a pandemic? This is never good policy, but I can't think of any worse timing. Of course, Democrats kept the provision buried deep within the bill, hoping the American public wouldn't notice.

The Democrats' new reporting requirements are effectively a tax hike and will ultimately hurt low- and middle-income contractors, the self-employed, and freelancers, many of whom have been devastated by the pandemic,

while Federal and State Governments will collect billions more in income tax revenue.

My Democratic colleagues want the American public to believe this is about catching tax cheats. And, to be clear, any attempt to evade taxes and defraud the public by not following the law should be condemned, and Congress should appropriately address it. However, a massive new reporting requirement of gig workers, many just trying to make ends meet in the midst of this pandemic, is not about catching tax fraud. It is about punishing the self-employed and raising revenues for the Democrats' massive spending plans.

It wasn't that long ago that President Biden promised that he wouldn't raise taxes on anyone making under \$400,000. Obviously, that was not true. But this isn't the first time Democrats have tried to quietly increase taxes and saddle the self-employed with new requirements like this. They did it with ObamaCare when they required businesses to send 1099 forms for all purchases of goods and services over \$600 annually. They quickly learned how unpopular and harmful this provision was, and they quickly repealed it. The Obama administration even praised the repeal as a "big win" for the self-employed. I guess some never learn.

What I am proposing is very simple. It is what the Democrats supported in 2011 when they repealed this bad tax increase in ObamaCare.

Today, I want to remove this new reporting requirement and simply reinstate the previous law back into U.S. code.

Increasing reporting requirements on our gig workers will create new and unexpected challenges for independent, self-employed workers and entrepreneurs, who are already facing an incredible burden created by the coronavirus.

Increasing costs and regulations on already struggling Americans is wrong, and I hope all of my colleagues will join me today and repeal this bad policy.

Madam President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 948, introduced earlier today. I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. WYDEN. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, the Senator from Florida claims to be looking out for gig workers and freelancers. The reality is very different.

What is in the bill, which the Senator from Florida apparently opposes, is a way to make sure that these workers can get the information they need to help meet their existing tax obliga-

tions. Without this information, for example, workers may lose out on benefits that would help them pay rent and buy groceries. They could inadvertently lose out on important tax benefits, like the earned income tax credit. The rescue plan, of course, expands the earned tax credit. We want to make sure that every eligible worker can get that financial help.

Finally, without reporting, workers might jeopardize the size of their future Social Security benefits, putting their retirement security at risk.

So what the Senator from Florida is up to here would deprive American entrepreneurs of the information they need to keep business records, comply with tax requirements, and claim important Federal benefits. For these reasons, I strongly object to this request for unanimous consent.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The junior Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, that sounded good, but this is clearly a tax increase. It is a massive tax increase, and it is a massive new reporting requirement on already struggling Americans. Our focus ought to be on helping support American workers, especially these gig economy workers who have been hurt so badly.

I am disappointed my colleague wants to increase costs and regulations on American families. What is strange is that my colleague from Oregon voted to repeal this bad provision when Democrats added it to ObamaCare. So what is crazy is, why is he OK today with raising taxes on the American people now? This is all part of the Democrats' tax-and-spend agenda, and it is just the beginning.

Let's remember, with the last spending bill the Democrats passed, we will have \$30 trillion of debt. As Governor of Florida, I worked so that we cut taxes 100 times, and we paid off a third of our State debt.

We have to think that way here. How can we grow this economy and reduce the costs for Americans, not increase the costs to Americans? These bad types of policies will ruin our economy and a shot at the American dream, which we all believe in.

I am going to fight every day to get the government out of the way and make sure that doesn't happen.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. LEE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at the conclu-

sion of my remarks, I be allowed to present an excerpt of my speech in Spanish. I will provide transcripts both in English and in Spanish of those paragraphs.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 884

Mr. LEE. Madam President, I have read the accounts and so have many of you. A young mother from Honduras, two young sisters from Guatemala, a 6-year-old child from El Salvador—they were all told by a local cartel that, for a price, a better life awaits them in America.

They are told, as evidenced by those chanting "Biden, Biden" at the border, that this new President has opened the borders and that amnesty is imminent, so get in while you can.

These vulnerable people are flocking to smugglers and violent criminals and paying them all that they have for their chance to get in while they can. In the last month, traffickers have allegedly made as much as \$14 million a week smuggling men, women, and children across the border.

Once indebted to cartels and coyotes, the price these vulnerable people pay is far more costly than money. According to media reports, men are used as slaves; women are raped endlessly. In fact, one-third of the women making their way to the border are reportedly sexually assaulted, and 68 percent of the people coming across the border are physically assaulted.

Children are rented, trafficked, and "recycled," as they put it, forced to pose as the child of one illegal immigrant after another to activate the so-called Flores get-out-of-jail-free card. One former Border Patrol agent told me that the smugglers prefer to use babies because they are unable to tell Border Patrol agents that these are not, in fact, their parents.

What of those who escape the clutches of the cartels? Well, estimates of how many children are currently in Customs and Border Patrol custody vary from more than 4,000 children to well over 15,000. Thousands of these children are being held, packed into housing facilities, for well over the 72-hour limit required by Flores—and with no end in sight.

The Biden administration is doing all it can to hide the humanitarian crisis created by its own immigration policies—a disaster that Secretary Mayorkas refuses to acknowledge as a crisis. It denied media access and appears to be enforcing an unofficial gag order on Border Patrol agents. Journalists have not been permitted inside the detention facilities since President Biden took office.

Now, it shouldn't be a surprise to any of us that the Biden administration's open border policies have resulted in this overwhelming crisis—and a crisis it is. This is what then-Candidate Biden promised us in the very first