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## Senate

The Senate met at 11 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.

O God, our Father, how excellent is Your Name in all the Earth. From dawn to sunset, Your mercies sustain us.

Today, inspire our Senators to embrace Your promises. May they remember Your promises to supply their needs, to never forsake them, and to prevent anything from separating them from Your love.

Lord, bestow Your blessings upon our lawmakers, making them wiser, stronger, and better, glorifying You in their work. Use them to advance Your Kingdom in our Nation and world as they attune their will to Your purposes. Create in them a life of purity, honesty, and altruism that contributes to solving the problems we face.

We pray in Your blessed 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 PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### BORN-ALIVE ABORTION SURVIVORS PROTECTION ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 6, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows: Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 4, S. 6, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask consent to speak for 3 minutes as in morning business.

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

#### NATIONAL TRAFFICKING AND MODERN SLAVERY PREVENTION MONTH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, January is National Trafficking and Modern Slavery Prevention Month, so today, Senator CORTEZ MASTO and I are introducing a resolution to honor victims and to raise very needed awareness.

As I speak, victims are being trafficked across our southern border. We each have a role to play in protecting the most vulnerable among us, especially women and children, from becoming victims of trafficking.

As chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I am committed to making human trafficking prevention a priority in this Congress, and I thank the Senator from Nevada for leading this effort.

#### BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. President, on his watch, President Biden wiped away student debt for more than 5 million borrowers, stiffing taxpayers with a heavier burden. That is on top of trillions of dollars in par-

tisan deficit spending that fueled the fires of inflation to 20 percent during his administration.

His failed border policies allowed more than 10 million people to come into the country illegally.

I remember, during his inaugural address, President Biden pledged to unite Americans. At that time, I welcomed that very much. Unfortunately, his administration's actions did not match those lofty words of uniting Americans.

During his 4 years in the Oval Office, the 46th President adopted the divisive policies of leftwing ideologues and the more radical candidates that he beat in the Presidential primary. It was a notable departure from my 28 years serving together with him here in the U.S. Senate.

Even on his way out the door, President Biden doubled down on the dark and divisive rhetoric that failed his party in this most recent election. He put illegal immigrants before the security of Americans. He doubled down on class warfare, hammering, as you so often hear, the same nail that the "wealthy" need to pay their "fair share" when our Tax Code is among the most progressive in the world.

Many Iowans question the fairness of pardoning the President's son, including for tax evasion and crimes not even specified, especially when President Biden promised that he would not pardon his son. Iowans also tell me that wiping away student debt isn't fair to those who saved and sacrificed to pay their fair share.

In this Congress, I will work with President Trump to put America first and strengthen the economy so hard-working families, farmers, and small businesses can get ahead and, of course, stay ahead. That includes renewing the Trump tax cuts, securing our border, and securing peace through strength.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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



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The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

#### CABINET NOMINATIONS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, in his inaugural address yesterday, President Trump spoke of his confidence in America. He spoke of the country's future: prosperity, security, strength. And I share the President's confidence and his optimism about what we can accomplish in the coming years.

President Trump has brought a new direction to Washington, and yesterday marked the beginning of a new era.

Here in the Senate, we have begun the process of confirming the President's Cabinet. Within hours of President Trump taking office, we confirmed the first of his Cabinet nominations—Marco Rubio to be Secretary of State—in a unanimous vote.

Secretary Rubio demonstrated his command of foreign policy last week at his confirmation hearing. He made it clear that under his leadership, the State Department will be focused on its core mission.

In his own words, that mission is “to promote peace abroad, and security and prosperity here at home.”

Gone are the days of a foreign policy exporting progressive ideologies, appeasing our adversaries, and demonstrating weakness on the world stage. The State Department is back in the business of advancing America's interests.

This is a welcome change in direction to our foreign policy, and Secretary Rubio is ready to hit the ground running. During his time in the Senate, he was a leading voice, articulating America's role in the world, and he has a clear command of the issues facing the world today.

As a Senator, he was vocal about the threat the Chinese Communist Party poses and the stakes of the competition between the United States and China. He recognizes the need for American leadership in Latin America to promote democracy and justice.

And he is clear-eyed about the threats that America faces from other countries as well as from nonstate actors.

I look forward to working with Secretary Rubio and the Trump administration to restore American strength abroad and promote peace and prosperity here at home.

In the coming days, the Senate will hold additional votes on the President's national security team. We expect a vote on the nomination of John Ratcliffe to be Director of the CIA later today. Mr. Ratcliffe, like Secretary Rubio, earned bipartisan support after his confirmation hearing last week.

He was reported out of the Intelligence Committee with a bipartisan vote yesterday, and he will bring valuable knowledge and experience to his new post, including from his time on the House Intelligence Committee and as Director of National Intelligence in the first Trump administration.

Under the Biden administration, the intelligence community made some notable misses. In 2021, the intelligence community failed to anticipate the swift collapse of Afghanistan in response to President Biden's decision to go ahead with the withdrawal, a withdrawal that cost the lives of 13 American servicemembers.

In 2022, the intelligence community warned that Ukraine would fall in days in the face of a Russian attack. Yet Kyiv is still firmly in Ukrainian hands almost 3 years later.

And in 2023, Hamas's October 7 attack on Israel took place with little or no warning from the intelligence community. And unfortunately, the list goes on. We need a return to fundamentals.

Last week, in his confirmation hearing, Mr. Ratcliffe promised to return to the CIA's core mission. That means recruiting spies to collect intelligence and providing objective intelligence analysis without bias.

Mr. Ratcliffe brings the right experience and the right approach to the CIA, and I look forward to working with him in this position.

#### REPUBLICAN SENATORS-ELECT

Mr. President, before I close, I want to say a word about two new Senators who will take office later today. I am very pleased to welcome Ashley Moody of Florida and John Husted of Ohio to the U.S. Senate. Ashley Moody began her career as a lawyer in private practice, and in all the spare time that a young lawyer has, she volunteered to help domestic violence victims seeking protection in court.

At the age of 31, after already practicing at a law firm and as a Federal prosecutor, she became the youngest judge in the State of Florida. During her time as a judge, she recruited volunteer attorneys to stand with children whose parents did not appear in court with them and developed a mentoring program for at-risk youth.

In 2018, she was elected attorney general in Florida, a post from which she held the Biden administration accountable and defended Florida law. And now, she is bringing her energy and experience here to the U.S. Senate.

Being sworn in alongside Ashley Moody today will be Jon Husted, Ohio's new Senator. “Senator” is just the latest title that Ohioans have called Jon Husted. He has been a State representative, speaker of the statehouse, a State senator, secretary of state for Ohio, Lieutenant Governor, and now U.S. Senator.

No matter his title, Ohioans know that they can depend on Jon Husted to fight for a smaller and more efficient government that genuinely serves its

citizens. And I am very pleased to welcome him here to the Senate.

Both our new Senators bring valuable experience, expertise, and perspective to the Senate Republican majority. And the whole Senate will benefit from their joining our ranks. I look forward to working with them.

I yield the floor.

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. 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.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

#### RYAN CORBETT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, this morning I have some amazingly great news. After more than 2 years of being unjustly detained by the Taliban, Ryan Corbett from Dansville, NY, is finally free and on his way home. In just a few hours—praise God—Ryan will be back on American soil and will be able to hug his wife Anna and his beautiful children, Miriam and Caleb and Ketsie. They represent the very best of Upstate New York—hard-working, God-fearing, persistent, and humble. Soon, Ryan will be back home in Western New York in the community he loved so much and that waited so desperately for his return.

I met with the Corbett family repeatedly. Every time I met with them, his wonderful wife Anna—strong but quiet—never gave up; and his beautiful children who so miss their dad, you could just feel it. And every time I met with them, just my heart went out, and I said “I have to do more and more and more.” It is a moment we have all prayed for and hoped for. And thank God this day has finally come. What a blessing. What an amazing day.

When I heard Ryan's story from his family and listened to them as they pushed and pushed for his release, I saw that even in the darkest moment, even when hope seemed lost, the Corbett family never, never gave up, and they never got angry. They never pointed fingers or called names. They just kept persisting and persisting and persisting. And their beautiful, hard, unrelenting, patient persistence has paid off.

I worked very closely with the Corbett family to build bipartisan support for Ryan's release. We brought attention to his imprisonment and made dozens of calls to elevate his case to the very highest levels of government. I want to thank President Biden and his administration's negotiating team as well as my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for helping bring Ryan back.

We can finally, finally say these five amazing words: Ryan Corbett is coming home. He is coming home to New York. He is coming home to Dansville.

I can't wait to see him and welcome him back very, very soon.

#### TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. President, now on the first day of President Trump's presidency, moments after taking the oath of office, President Trump declared that it was the dawning of a golden age here in America. But on day one into his presidency, it is clear that Donald Trump's golden age is not for the working and middle class. His golden age, rather, is for the special interests, the wealthy elite, and the corporate insiders he promised to take on as President. Just look at his first day in the White House, which shows exactly what I am saying.

On day one, President Trump, in his Executive orders, made it harder for Americans to save on prescription drug costs. President Trump cleared the way for Big Oil and polluters and halted leasing of offshore wind farms. He took steps to make it harder to enroll in the ACA and made Medicaid less generous. He removed the United States from the Paris Climate Accords.

Nothing the President did on day one lowered grocery prices. Nothing helped Americans achieve their dream of owning a home. Nothing will help working families earn more and save more. Their drug costs will go up. The cost of buying and maintaining a home will go up. The cost of healthcare will go up. The cost of energy will go up.

So who is exactly Donald Trump's golden age for? Not for working Americans; that is for sure. President Trump's golden age is one for America's biggest drug companies, who can now worry less about lowering their prices. It is a golden age for America's richest oil executives, who want nothing more than to kill clean jobs and deepen America's dependence on fossil fuels. It is a golden age for America's top 1 percent, who want another trillion-dollar tax break, paid for on the backs of workers in the middle class.

And, sadly, it is a golden age for lawlessness and lawbreakers who were pardoned yesterday by President Trump. There is no other way to describe President Trump's pardon of January 6 offenders than un-American. Let's be clear. President Trump didn't just pardon protesters; he pardoned some people convicted of assaulting police officers and seditious conspiracy. It is a betrayal of the highest order of our Capitol police officers who risked their lives to keep us safe.

When President Trump talks about a golden age, he is talking about a golden age for drug companies, powerful oil executives, and rioters who attack our police and attack our democracy. That is not the golden age Americans want.

#### NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, nominations, this week the Senate will continue exercising its constitutional duty to offer advice and consent on the President's nominees.

Last night, the Senate unanimously confirmed our former colleague, Sen-

ator Rubio, as Secretary of State. Even though Senator Rubio and Democrats differ on many issues, it was clear he was very well-qualified for the job and deserved confirmation.

Now, if every one of President Trump's nominees were as qualified and experienced as Senator Rubio, they would sail through the Senate with bipartisan support. But, sadly, too many of the President's nominees do not match Senator Rubio's caliber, too many have troubling backgrounds, too many seem unprepared for the job and proved so during testimony, too many nominees have been rushed through before their paperwork has been submitted.

Senator Rubio was thorough and quick with his background checks and documentation. He did it the right way. But too many other nominees have delayed and dragged their feet. So it is wrong to try and rush them through.

And too many of the President's nominees seem more interested in pushing the ultraright's extremist agenda than in fighting for working- and middle-class families.

Later today, I will meet with President Trump's nominee for OMB Director, Russell Vought. Mr. Vought is one of the most troubling nominees that President Trump has selected. He is about as ultraright as they come. So during our meeting, I hope to get a clarity on a simple question: Who will Mr. Vought fight for if confirmed? Is it the American people, or is it Project 2025, which Americans have already rejected?

I look forward to our conversation because I believe it is important both sides hear directly and candidly from the President's nominees before we are asked to vote on their nomination. After all, the debate over President Trump's nominees is not just about senior-level positions in the administration; the debate on nominees is a debate about the President's very agenda and about who will benefit. Whose side are these nominees on?

President Trump promised an agenda that will fight for the working and middle class. He promised a golden age for the country, but actions speak louder than words. And so far, the President's nominees suggest that if there is any golden age coming, it is only one for the very, very elite.

So Democrats will continue to get the President's nominees on the record on very important questions. Will Donald Trump's nominees focus on cutting costs, or will they be more interested in cutting sweetheart deals for big businesses? Will they protect our communities, or will they focus more on protecting special interests? Will they serve middle-class and working families, or will they serve the swamp? That is what the American people want to know.

I yield the floor.

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

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

#### IMMIGRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, there are certain things we all agree on, I believe. No. 1, our border must be secure, and, No. 2, we should deport any dangerous individuals who are here illegally, period. But the Executive order signed by President Trump last night did not target criminals or even those who entered our country without authorization.

For example, the President suspended the task force on the reunification families created in the aftermath of his disastrous family separation policy of his first Presidency. Over 1,000 families remain separated today—in other words, children who don't know where their parents are. This task force was created to reunite them—simply that—and, now, it has been suspended. Stopping this task force does not make us a safer Nation and certainly doesn't help these children.

The President also suspended the Refugee Admissions Program, which provides a safe haven for those fleeing oppressive regimes around the world. They include Afghans, Afghan women, Uighurs, and Rohingya. Many refugee applicants wait decades to come to the United States lawfully, and every single one of them must undergo a rigorous vetting, more than any other group of immigrants coming into the United States. I have worked in and with these refugee camps. They literally stay in tents and temporary shelters for months and years, going through background checks before they are even considered eligible for coming to the United States. Yet the Trump administration has already canceled flights for over 1,600 Afghan refugees scheduled to come here.

Who are these people? Many of them are families of Active-Duty U.S. military personnel and those who are at risk because they fought on our side, defending our troops in the Afghan theater. Stopping these flights of friendly refugees coming to America, after having helped us and risked their lives to help us, doesn't make America safe. It sends a message, sadly, to allies supporting our troops around the world that we may not be there to support them when they need us.

The President also announced his plan to attempt to deny citizenship to children born in the United States if their parents are not citizens or lawful permanent residents. I ask anyone who is interested in this issue to do something very basic: Read the first sentence of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. It is in clear violation of our Constitution to eliminate birthright citizenship. It does nothing to make our country safer—nothing.

We need to secure our border. That is why I worked for years to pass bipartisan legislation that fixes our broken immigration system.

Mr. President, before you came to the Senate, we considered comprehensive immigration reform on a bipartisan basis. I was part of an eight Senators task force—Democrats and Republicans, equal numbers. We wrote a bill, brought it to the floor, and got over 60 votes for the bill. Unfortunately, the House, under Republican control at the time, wouldn't take up the issue. We had an approach that still ought to be considered when it comes to changing our immigration system to make it safer for America.

But we also need to protect millions of noncitizens who Americans rely on each day. All across America this morning, many parents headed off to work and stopped to drop their kid off at daycare. They handed their child over to an undocumented person who works during the course of the day to keep your child safe and to make sure they are there at night when you return to pick them up.

The same thing is true about nursing homes and a lot of care facilities. Parents and grandparents are being carefully watched every minute of every day by undocumented people who are working there, whose wages aren't the greatest, but these people are willing to take on this job. For most people, it is a critically important job for their family. They want their mom to not only go to breakfast with a smile but to be escorted back to her room safely. They need undocumented people for that to happen. A high percentage of those who work in these facilities qualify as undocumented.

Immigrants have been a key part of America. I know that, and I say that as a son of an immigrant to this country. Our Nation has always needed immigrants. It still does. They put food on our tables, they care for our kids, and they help care for our parents and grandparents. What would we do without them? They don't deserve to live in fear every single day that they are going to be part of a mass deportation.

Any real solution to our immigration challenge must give them stability. Americans deserve a real fix to our broken immigration system that protects America, protects American workers, and treats immigrants fairly.

Mr. President, 13 years ago, in response to a bipartisan request from myself and the late Republican Senator Richard Lugar of Indiana, President Obama established the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or the DACA Program. DACA has protected from deportation over 800,000 young people, all of whom arrived in our country as children, some as young as a few months old.

These young kids are known as Dreamers. I know a little bit about that. I was the sponsor of the original DREAM Act, over 20 years ago. They grew up alongside our kids, with the

same hopes and ambitions. They stood up in a classroom every morning and pledged allegiance to that flag, believing it was their flag too. Many have gone on to serve our Nation as service-members, doctors, and first responders. They believe in the American dream just as much as we do.

Without permanent legal protection, these young people have been forced to live in uncertainty. They have to renew their DACA status every 2 years, go through a background check, and pay a filing fee.

In December, President Trump committed to work with Congress on a plan to protect Dreamers. I am looking forward to that. I worked with the President in his first term, and I am ready to work with him again. Let's get this done as part of immigration reform.

But, last Friday, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals declared the DACA Program illegal again. The decision left in place protections for current DACA recipients, while the appeal is pending, but left other Dreamers in limbo. The time to act is now.

I urge the President to come to the table to negotiate a solution for Dreamers as part of immigration reform.

#### JANUARY 6 PARDONS

Mr. President, on another matter, on January 6, 2021, I was seated in the chair right here on the floor of the Senate. A solemn constitutional proceeding was disrupted when a mob of thugs attacked and trashed the U.S. Capitol in an attempt to overturn a free and fair election.

I remember it well.

Vice President Pence was sitting in the chair that you are occupying now. The Secret Service came in and, literally, physically removed him, out that door of the Chamber.

They then announced to us to sit tight. This was going to be a safe room in the Capitol. There was a mob that was descending on the Capitol at the moment. We are going to keep everybody safe. They warned us that there were a lot of people coming into this Chamber to line the walls because they wanted to be kept safe from this mob that was coming into the Capitol.

Ten minutes later, a Capitol Hill policeman stood up and said: New plans. We are all leaving immediately. Get out of your chairs and go out that door. We will lead you to another safe room.

That was the circumstance of January 6, 2021. I remember it well. I saw the mob as we went outside. It was growing in size, thousands of people descending on the Capitol. That was the grim reality of that day.

At the end of the day, the mob confronted the Capitol Hill police and the DC police who were here, trying to keep this building and keep us safe as Members of Congress who were doing our constitutional duty.

The subsequent deaths of five of our law enforcement officers because of that mob and the injuries to approximately 140 others are a matter of fact,

many of whom still pay a price day for what happened on January 6, 2021.

And now the attackers have been pardoned by President Trump, who literally sent them from a rally to come up here, and what happened happened.

Consider the following individuals who received their pardon yesterday from President Trump:

David Dempsey was one of them. He was convicted of assaulting police officers by using "his hands, feet, flagpoles, crutches, pepper spray, broken pieces of furniture, and anything else he could get his hands on" as weapons.

Shane Jenkins was another one, convicted of using two tomahawk axes to break into the Capitol and assaulting police officers by throwing a wooden desk drawer and flagpole at them.

Kyle Fitzsimons was convicted for five separate assaults against law enforcement, including one that caused career-ending and life-altering injuries to U.S. Capitol Police Sergeant Aquilino Gonell.

And Kenneth Bonawitz, a member of the so-called Proud Boys, assaulted at least six officers, including placing one officer in a chokehold and lifting him up by the neck. Bonawitz injured one officer so severely that the officer has been forced to retire.

All of these people were among the roughly 1,500 January 6 insurrectionists who President Trump pardoned last night.

What happened to claims by a party of being in favor of law and order?

Even President Trump's own Vice President said last week—the Senator from the State of Ohio:

If you committed violence on [January 6], obviously you shouldn't be pardoned.

That didn't apply last night. All the people I just described were pardoned by President Trump for their actions in harming law enforcement in the Capitol on January 6.

Last week, I asked President Trump's Attorney General nominee, Pam Bondi, about pardoning January 6 rioters who assaulted police officers. She said: "I condemn any violence on a law enforcement officer."

Don't we all?

One of my Judiciary Committee Republican colleagues actually criticized me last week for even asking that question. Here is what he said:

I find it hard to believe that the President of the United States . . . would look at facts that were used to convict the violent people on January 6th and say it was just an intemperate moment. . . . it's an absurd and unfair hypothetical.

The action by President Trump is unfair, but, unfortunately, it is no longer hypothetical. These law enforcement officers risk their lives for us—literally, all of us, not just the elected officials but the thousands of visitors who come to this Capitol. They stand quietly by, watching to make sure that nothing goes wrong, but they are literally risking their lives for us every single day.

What was the message last night of pardoning the people who assaulted them on January 6, 2021?

Some people died as a result of that attack. Every American should be appalled.

I am very unhappy that these men and women who give us so much every single day are taken for granted so much that the President pardoned those who attacked them. That was wrong. We should stand by those who stand by us, and we should be willing to say to them: Thank you. Thank you for risking your lives for our visitors, for Members of Congress. And those who assaulted you were not just on a pleasant Capitol tour; they had a goal in mind. That goal, unfortunately, was at the expense of these men and women in uniform.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CURTIS). The Senator from Texas.

#### TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, as the world knows by now, yesterday, President Trump was sworn in as the 47th President of the United States. I think he is only the second President who has been sworn in on two different occasions. He is both the 45th and the 47th President of the United States.

It was an honor to see him take the oath of office yesterday in the Capitol Rotunda. I only regret, because of the weather, that more people weren't able to see that in person. I was with a number of my Texas constituents this morning. They are not accustomed to the cold temperatures, but they were prepared to dress warmly and to deal with it. They all seemed to be in good spirits because of the outcome of the election, and they were happy to see the President sworn in, as was I.

I want to express my personal congratulations, along with that of millions of people across the country, to President Trump and our former colleague J.D. VANCE.

I have told people, when J.D. VANCE came to the Senate, I actually had met him before because when he went to Yale Law School, he actually was an intern on the Judiciary Committee that I serve on, and he worked in my office for a very brief period of time. I didn't know him then. As I told him, I knew him before he was famous, before he wrote "Hillbilly Elegy" and his career took off like a rocket ship. I am proud of what Vice President VANCE has been able to accomplish.

If you think about it, here is a guy who at 40 years old is Vice President of the United States, and if you read or listen to "Hillbilly Elegy"—about the circumstances under which J.D. VANCE was raised—you can see that he has overcome a lot of obstacles in life. He served as a U.S. marine, and I know he was celebrating last night with the Ohio State championship win, being a graduate of that school. It was great to see him get sworn in yesterday as well. Again, only in America—only in America—can something like that happen.

#### IMMIGRATION

It is no secret either that in the last 4 years, the Biden administration's

policies have been nothing but a disaster for the Nation, and no State has been more negatively affected than my State, the State of Texas. We have 1,200 miles of common border with Mexico, and the open border policies of the Biden administration have been an unmitigated disaster from a public health standpoint and a public safety standpoint. Many of our border communities have simply been overwhelmed and overrun just by the sheer volume of people coming from all around the world.

This is not the sort of immigration that you have seen in the past where poor people have come to the United States across the border to work and send money home. You literally have seen, with the Biden open border policies, people from all around the world show up and claim asylum or be paroled into the interior of the United States, which is like a blinking green light to anybody and everybody who wants to come to America, knowing they would be released under the Biden administration's policies.

We have seen millions. Nobody really knows for sure how many millions of people come and basically move into the United States outside of our legal immigration program, which I think is very important, but there are also the roughly 2 million, we think, "got-aways"—people evading law enforcement—and you can only imagine what they are up to. We know that there was no reason to evade law enforcement under the Biden administration if you didn't have a criminal record or if you weren't up to no good, because you knew you would be released. So it only was logical—it only made sense—that these were people who were either carrying drugs or had criminal records or were otherwise engaged in antisocial activities. Like I said, we think maybe about 2 million of those people made their way into the interior of the United States.

One of the most important ways that President Trump began with his signature on these Executive orders, beginning yesterday, was to reverse the policies of the Biden administration and to get our country back on track in securing our southern border. This border crisis, as I indicated, is one that President Biden himself practically invited—invited—during his first campaign when he encouraged migrants to "immediately surge the border." I mean, this is crazy talk if you think about it, but that is what he said. Of course, this is perhaps the one campaign promise President Biden actually kept.

In the early months of 2021, President Biden appointed Vice President Harris—we all remember this—as his border czar. Well, he tasked her with the role of managing this growing surge of migrants. Even back then, in the early stages of what was to become a historic humanitarian disaster, some expressed concerns that Ms. Harris might not be up to the task, but when she was made

aware of and made to answer for her lack of qualifications, she hadn't actually been to the border.

Specifically, as to the fact she hadn't been there, Kamala Harris made light of the question with a famous quip.

She said:

And I haven't been to Europe. . . . I don't understand the point you're making.

Somebody pointed out that she hadn't been to the border. She said, "I haven't been to Europe," and she didn't understand the point. Well, everybody else got it even if she didn't. She was singularly unqualified, and she bore this out, I think, by her service as the border czar. She was singularly unqualified to be the border czar, and it took another 3 months for her to accomplish her one and only visit to the Texas-Mexico border.

I can tell you that, as I said, Texas has a 1,200-mile common border, and the United States has a 2,000-mile common border, and not every piece of the border is the same. If you go to Arizona or California or New Mexico, many of those places are very different from the border with Texas and Mexico. But on this one visit to the border in Texas, Vice President Harris steered clear of ground zero of the surge of illegal immigration, which is the Rio Grande Valley. That was the epicenter of the border crisis, yet she was a no-show. Instead, she traveled to El Paso—which is another border town but very, very different—for a sanitized, made-for-TV visit.

To add insult to injury, the Vice President visited Texas multiple times last summer to fundraise and to campaign for President, but she didn't take the time to go to the border at all. But this should come as no surprise because she seemed completely disinterested in performing any function as the border czar. Under her negligent watch, the surge at the beginning of President Biden's Presidency only went from bad to worse.

The Biden-Harris administration presided over daily, weekly, and monthly records of illegal crossings across the border. Customs and Border Protection, the Federal Agency responsible, has tracked more than 10 million encounters across the Nation under President Biden's leadership, including 8.7 million at the southern border. More than 400,000 unaccompanied children—to me, this is one of the scandals that really hasn't gotten adequate attention—400,000 unaccompanied children have been encountered at the border and placed with sponsors in the United States.

Now, the Biden administration resisted any sort of background checks on the sponsors. As a matter of fact, they placed these children with other illegal immigrants in the country and in homes where we didn't know whether there were either gang members or people with records as sex offenders, for example. And the sad truth is that these children, like the 10 million or so other migrants that came across the

border, ended up in the United States courtesy of the cartels, criminal organizations that get rich smuggling people into the United States. But they don't just smuggle people; they smuggle drugs and other contraband too.

But these children in particular, once they arrive in the United States, many of them are exploited, treated as indentured servants until they pay back the debt they owe their traffickers. And those are the lucky ones. Others are trafficked for sex, recruited into gangs, neglected. We don't know.

The Biden administration couldn't tell you whether these children were going to school or getting the healthcare they need or the like. As a matter of fact, they said: We have no responsibility. That is the responsibility of the State child welfare organizations.

We know they are overwhelmed, and here are 400,000 more children that are dumped into their hands. As a result of the shelter facilities becoming increasingly crowded, the Biden administration rushed the placement process of these children and now has completely lost track of at least 85,000 of those unaccompanied minors. That is according to a New York Times investigative story where they actually followed up calling the sponsors, only to get no answer. Knocking on the door, nobody would come to the door. So we don't know—they don't know—what happened to these children.

We also know the cartels are getting richer trafficking in drugs, as I mentioned, including fentanyl, a synthetic opioid which is very different from heroin and cocaine, which require a lengthy process of growing a plant and then processing the drug. Cartels are selling fentanyl, which uses chemical precursors that come from China that then go to Mexico and are mixed up and then pressed to look like a pharmaceutical drug. But they are counterfeit drugs, and they killed more than 70,000 people last year alone.

This drug that comes across the southern border with very little—well, we just don't know how much of it actually makes its way across. We know how much is interdicted, but it could be just a fraction of the number that actually makes its way across the border. And here is the tragic statistic. This is the leading cause of death for young people between the age of 18 and 45 in America.

I have been to numerous high schools in Texas where grieving parents said: Well, our child ate dinner at the dinner table; then, the next morning, we went and found him or her dead in her room—having taken something they thought was a relatively innocuous drug, only to find out the hard way that it was laced with fentanyl, which took their life.

Well, our Border Patrol has simply been overwhelmed by the volume of people coming across the border because there is no such thing as deterrence. One of the things about law en-

forcement you learn is, by enforcing the law, you can discourage other people from violating the law. And by actually enforcing border security, you can deter people from coming in the first place.

But without deterrence, under the Biden administration, the Border Patrol has simply been overwhelmed. With historic numbers of people attempting to cross and successfully crossing, they have not gotten the support they need to handle the magnitude of challenges they face every day.

The men and women who serve in the Border Patrol are my heroes. They are loyal, patriotic Americans who put on the uniform and do what their government has asked them to do, until they are told that you have to tie one hand behind your back and you can't actually do your job because you just have to welcome people into the country, and you can't keep people out who are violating the law.

So I am going to extend my gratitude to the men and women who serve in the Border Patrol, as well as the National Border Patrol Council, which has been enormously helpful as a credible source of what actual conditions have been along the border so that the American people can know how bad it has gotten to be. The National Border Patrol Council has been our partner and friend and helped as Senator CRUZ and I have welcomed many of our colleagues to the border so that they can see firsthand what we have learned as a result of our many times visiting there.

And I particularly want to express my gratitude to Jason Owens, who is the outgoing Border Patrol Chief. Even when the administration did not provide adequate support to handle this historic crisis, Jason had the backs of the men and women of the Border Patrol.

But the good news is that, under President Trump, all of our Border Patrol agents will start receiving the support that they need and that they deserve from the Federal Government.

President Trump used his first day in office to make a number of actions addressing this crisis. He declared that this historic, ongoing crisis is a national emergency, which it is. He designated the cartels that smuggle the people and the drugs into the country as foreign terrorist organizations. He directed the Departments of State and Homeland Security to resume the migrant protection protocols, otherwise known as the "Remain in Mexico" program.

So people who want to come to the United States legally through the asylum system, they can't come to the interior of the United States and simply be released; they have to remain in Mexico and await the processing of their claim for asylum. This will, of course, deter economic migrants from making this dangerous journey by having them await their asylum hearings in Mexico.

At the same time, the President directed the Department of Homeland Security to stop catch-and-release. If you ask the Border Patrol: How do you explain all of this, this huge mass of humanity, this tsunami of people coming across the border, they say: There are no consequences for coming illegally under the Biden administration. And one of those incentives for people to continue to come is employing a catch-and-release policy because, without detention, you are never going to stop the flow. And this was a primary pull factor of migrants under the Biden administration.

President Trump also terminated the Biden administration's unlawful Cuban-Haitian-Nicaraguan-Venezuelan parole program. So "parole" is a word that people may be familiar with in a criminal context, where people can be paroled out of prison. This is a little different. In the immigration context, this means that individuals who meet certain select criteria can be released into the interior of the United States, but it is supposed to be done on a hardship, case-by-case basis.

The Biden administration completely transformed parole by doing it categorically. In other words, they said 30,000 migrants per month are allowed to be released in the United States if you come from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, or Venezuela. That is 360,000 a year just released into the interior of the United States and not done on a case-by-case basis. It violated the law Congress put in place, but the Biden administration didn't really seem to care about what the law was; they were going to do what they wanted to do.

I am pleased that President Trump has directed the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice to completely fulfill the requirements of the DNA Fingerprint Act of 2005, a bill that the former Senator from Arizona, Senator Jon Kyl, and I worked to enact. Under that law, the Department of Homeland Security will protect Americans from dangerous criminal illegal immigrants by collecting DNA samples from migrants apprehended at the border. In many instances, it can just be a cheek swab, but that DNA allows you to positively identify people who may be criminal aliens.

President Trump's order that the Department of Homeland Security verify the relationships claimed by family units apprehended at the border will help put an end to the cartels' child trafficking that the Biden administration policies enabled. Because the cartels are smart and they knew what the policies were, if a family unit—that is, an adult and a child—came together, they were treated a little bit differently. But we found out the hard way that the cartels would simply hire out these children so that the adults could get into the country claiming to be a family unit. Again, more child trafficking—child abuse, if you will. President Trump's order that the Department of Homeland Security verify

these relationships will help put an end to the cartels' child trafficking which the Biden administration enabled.

I am pleased that President Trump has also ended the use of the Customs and Border Protection One app. This was an app that you could download on your phone that allowed migrants to more quickly and efficiently cross the open border.

Under the Biden administration, you could simply make an appointment using this app on your phone, meaning the Federal Government would facilitate your entry into the United States on a quicker basis. It is really bizarre if you think about it. But it gave the cartels other ways to make money by selling appointments that they had made on the app. It was obviously hijacked by the cartels, who are not dumb—they are smart—and they are driven by a profit motive.

I am glad that President Trump made border security a day one priority of his administration. I look forward to continuing to work with him to help improve the safety for communities all across Texas and all across the Nation.

But I am also thrilled that President Trump has chosen a new U.S. Border Patrol Chief, a Texan, Mike Banks. People may have heard of Mike Banks before because he was Governor Abbott's border chief.

Mike brings incredible credentials to this job. While the Vice President made only one trip to the Texas-Mexico border during her entire tenure, Mike is a former Border Patrol agent. He has got vast experience at the border.

He understands firsthand the impact on our border communities and what our Border Patrol agents have been through. He spent two-thirds of his more than three decades of Federal law enforcement at the United States-Mexico border. As I indicated, Governor Abbott had selected him to serve as the Texas border czar, and Mike has also served in the U.S. Navy military police.

So I have had the privilege of getting to know Mike, and I know his qualifications, his experience and his competence and his firsthand experience dealing with the challenges at our border, and I have no doubt that he will make an outstanding 27th head of the U.S. Border Patrol.

I look forward to working with him and President Trump to secure our borders and to make our community safe again.

This is one of the main reasons that President Trump was elected, along with sky-high inflation, and the very dangerous world that seems to have grown up in the face of the weakness projected by the Biden administration around the world. But job No. 1 is to secure our borders and protect the American people. And I am proud of the fact that President Trump has, on day one, taken such important steps to begin that process.

## RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:33 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. BRITT).

## BORN-ALIVE ABORTION SURVIVORS PROTECTION ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

### NOMINATION OF JOHN RATCLIFFE

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, at some point, the Senate will vote on the nomination of John Ratcliffe to be the Director of the CIA. I am here to outline for just a few moments why I oppose this nomination.

Let me begin by saying I often vote for nominees who have different policy views than I do. However, my concerns with Mr. Ratcliffe are much deeper than that.

In 2020, I opposed his confirmation to be Director of National Intelligence because I believe his partisanship and willingness essentially went to the proposition of doing what would please Donald Trump. Unfortunately, his actions as head of National Intelligence only confirmed my concerns. Today, I want to focus on John Ratcliffe's commitment to the law and his truthfulness with Congress. I will give a couple of examples to illustrate my concerns.

In 2019, the Congress passed a law requiring the Director of National Intelligence to submit an unclassified report on who was responsible for the brutal murder of Washington Post reporter and U.S. resident Jamal Khashoggi. In 2020, after John Ratcliffe was nominated to be the head of National Intelligence, I asked him at his confirmation hearing whether he intended to follow that law. He responded that he needed to take a look at the underlying intelligence to see what could be released, and that is not the same as saying he would do as the law required.

After Director Ratcliffe was confirmed as DNI, he decided that nothing more could be declassified about the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. The effect of that decision was to cover up the fact that Saudi Prince Mohammed bin Salman approved the operation to capture or kill Khashoggi. The public only has the facts today because after the 2020 election, then-head of National Intelligence Avril Haines abided by the law and released the report.

But while John Ratcliffe was Director of National Intelligence, the Saudi leadership was protected from public accountability. While he was Director of National Intelligence, Director Ratcliffe wrote to multiple Members of Congress saying that he had completed his review of the intelligence and determined that nothing more could be

released. Despite the fact that the Congress passed a law, Director Ratcliffe insisted that there was only marginal public interest in declassification. He said this in three letters to me, to Acting Chairman Rubio and Vice Chairman WARNER, and to the chair of the House Intelligence Committee. To me, this raises questions about John Ratcliffe's commitment to the law.

Basically, I have concerns about his truthfulness with the Congress. As part of this nomination process, I submitted a written question asking him why he didn't obey the law. He responded that a review had been necessary to determine what could be declassified and I quote here:

This review was not completed until after I left office.

Madam President, that statement by Mr. Ratcliffe just wasn't true. Mr. Ratcliffe wrote three letters to the Congress saying that the review had been completed. That fact was even included in the ODNI's representations to a court in a FOIA case.

So here is why I am opposing the Ratcliffe nomination. If John Ratcliffe is willing to make representations to the Congress that are contradicted by what is in the public record, imagine how easy it would be for him to misrepresent classified matters behind a veil of secrecy.

There are other aspects of John Ratcliffe's record as DNI that are troubling. He said during his confirmation hearing he would tell truth to power. The record suggests otherwise. For example, at the end of September 2020, he released intelligence about Hillary Clinton's 2016 campaign. That was even though the intelligence community didn't know if it was accurate or the extent to which it was fabricated or exaggerated by Russian intelligence. Needless to say, this was a major break from standard practice, and it is hard to escape the conclusion that it was done for partisan political purposes, particularly given the timing.

I asked Mr. Ratcliffe whether he had ever taken any actions that were actually in conflict with the positions of the President. His response was simply to offer nothing.

Madam President, my concerns in 2020 that John Ratcliffe was too partisan to be confirmed as the head of an intelligence Agency have been validated by these specific examples I have cited today. As I said, he also now has a record of ignoring a law passed by the U.S. Congress and then misrepresenting basic facts about that decision.

So when the Senate does vote on the Ratcliffe nomination, I want the record to show that I strongly oppose the nomination.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

### HAMAS

Ms. ROSEN. Madam President, on October 7, 2023, Hamas terrorists shocked the human conscience when they carried out an attack on Israel