

want to hold up foreign aid as blackmail without getting caught? Does he want to eliminate the scrutiny of improper government contracts? An independent inspector general could prevent many of these abuses.

An inspector general's job can be boiled down to two words: "transparency" and "accountability." That is what President Trump is apparently afraid of, but it is something most Americans want to have in their government.

JANUARY 6

Madam President, for all the talk President Trump does about standing up for law and order, he spent the first few days in office doing the opposite—pardoning lawless rioters who invaded the Capitol and attacked police officers on January 6.

Today, I am joining all 47 of my Senate Democratic colleagues in introducing a resolution condemning the pardoning of individuals who were found guilty of assaulting Capitol Police Officers on January 6. Senator MURRAY will seek the passage of this resolution this week. I hope our Republican colleagues will join us in condemning these pardons. Many of them saw the violence of January 6 firsthand. I did. This should be an easy resolution to pass.

By handing out these pardons to convicted criminals, President Trump is effectively saying: If you want to attack our brave police officers, that is OK. You are exonerated.

The President is saying: Do you want to try to thwart our democracy? Fine by me.

The President is saying: Do you want to break the law and engage in political violence? Be my guest.

One individual who received a pardon—listen to this—one individual who received a pardon was convicted of seditious conspiracy. A few days after the attack, he said:

[His] only regret is that they should have brought rifles.

That man is being pardoned. What a disgrace.

To repeat:

[His] only regret is that they should have brought rifles.

And President Trump pardoned him. Who could believe that? Who could believe that in America, that would happen? A few years back, no one would have even imagined. That is in some ways how our country has deteriorated, with President Trump doing what he is doing.

The people who invaded the Capitol on January 6, whether they engaged in violence or not, committed a very serious crime. There is no gray area here, especially not when it comes to people who attack police officers. The pardons must be condemned by the Senate, and Democrats will try to do that through our resolution this week.

CABINET NOMINATIONS

Madam President, on nominations, this week, three of the President's

most controversial nominees will testify before Senate committees—Kash Patel, Tulsi Gabbard, and Robert Kennedy, Jr. All three nominees have deeply troubling backgrounds and equally troubling views. If Pete Hegseth's nomination process was any indication, these controversial nominees can expect to face immense scrutiny from both sides of the aisle and from the American people.

Americans deserve to know: Will the Trump administration strengthen our health and security or strengthen big drug companies and pseudoscience? Mr. Kennedy's hearing will give us answers.

Also, we have to know from Mr. Kennedy: Does he want to eliminate lifesaving vaccines that have saved the lives and health of so many—so many—millions of children in the United States and around the globe?

Americans also deserve to know: Will the FBI focus on public safety and the rule of law or focus on Donald Trump's personal grievances? Mr. Patel, in his hearing, will give us answers.

Americans need to know: Will the Trump administration protect us from foreign adversaries and deal in truth and facts when it comes to classified intelligence—if there were ever a need for a fact-based Agency, it is the intelligence Agencies which gather information to keep us safe—or will these Agencies be turned to give shelter to conspiracy and misinformation in our intelligence? Ms. Gabbard's hearing will give us some very important answers here.

The people entrusted to oversee matters of public health and law enforcement and classified intelligence should be beyond reproach. Their qualifications should not be in doubt. But President Trump seems to have chosen three deeply unqualified, deeply untrustworthy individuals to these positions. Like Mr. Hegseth, it is hard to imagine that they are the best for the job or even close to it.

INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

Madam President, today is International Holocaust Remembrance Day. We commemorate it because it is the 80th anniversary of the liberation of the few Jews who survived and were imprisoned at Auschwitz.

Never again can we allow anti-Semitism or any other form of hatred to fester and grow in the way we saw during the Nazi regime. We must always tell the truth about what happened to the Jewish people 80 years ago. We can never allow history to be forgotten, shunned, or deliberately erased.

It saddens me that this year, Holocaust Remembrance Day comes at a time of rising hatred against Jewish people, especially here in America after October 7.

Just yesterday, I visited a popular Israeli restaurant a few blocks from my home in Brooklyn. It is called Miriam. The night before, the restaurant and its owners were the victims of a despicable act of vandalism. Their windows were smeared with red paint and

defiled with messages of hate. The attack happened simply because the owners are Jewish, just because the owners are Jewish. That is anti-Semitism, pure and simple, and we must condemn it together forcefully.

As ugly as this incident was, I was inspired by how the owners and the community responded. They chose to leave the vandalism up for a day so that people and the media could see the dangers of letting anti-Semitism gain strength. Many in the area stopped by for lunch, offered to help with the cleanup, or just shared a message of support. I went and visited the restaurant in the evening with an order to go. That is New York at its best when these neighbors look after each other in the face of hate.

We must never, never fail to condemn anti-Semitism wherever or whenever it rears its ugly head. It comes now in many new dimensions. Some people seem impervious to things that seem to many Jewish people as being outright anti-Semitic. We have to be so vigilant. That is the best way to honor what Holocaust Remembrance Day represents.

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

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

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 39, S. Res. 40, and S. Res. 41.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. BARRASSO. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles, where applicable, be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

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

The resolutions (S. Res. 39 and S. Res. 40) were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

The resolution (S. Res. 41) was agreed to.

(The resolution is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

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.

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

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

NOMINATION OF SCOTT BESSENT

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, I rise today in opposition to Scott Bessent to be the next Secretary of the Treasury and in support of tens of millions of working families who need a government on their side.

The Treasury Secretary is one of the President's top economic advisers. He has the power to lower costs for hard-working people or to give billionaires another break.

Now, Mr. Bessent has a long history as an investment manager, helping rich clients get even richer. In fact, helping rich people get richer has been a very profitable business for him. Mr. Bessent is now a billionaire himself. He owns not one but two multimillion-dollar mansions, including one in the Bahamas, and he has hundreds of millions of dollars in investments.

Now, he spent a lot of money, but he saved money in one area: He hasn't paid the taxes he owes. According to an analysis from congressional tax experts, Mr. Bessent has refused to pay \$2 million in taxes that he owed on his hedge fund earnings, just in the past 3 years.

And Mr. Bessent has no demonstrated track record of fighting to make life better or more affordable for working people.

So, let's start with some of Trump's economic plans that Mr. Bessent would be in charge of advancing. Right now, Republicans in the White House and in Congress are working through their plans to extend tax breaks for billionaires and giant corporations, paid for in part with major cuts to healthcare. In plain English, Republicans are hoping you won't notice major budget cuts for nursing homes that take care of your grandpa or the cuts in school lunches for poor kids. Move grandpa out of the nursing home and let the little kids go hungry in order to make sure that a tiny handful of billionaires get a few more truckloads of cash from Uncle Sam.

There is a truth no one can escape: Someone has to pay to run this country. Folks like Scott Bessent think the burden should be just a little heavier on working people because billionaires like him are smarter than everyone else. One place or the other, someone has to pay.

So during his hearing, I asked Mr. Bessent about those cuts for billionaires. I asked if there were any billionaires already rich enough that they didn't need another tax cut. And Mr. Bessent said, well, that it was unwise to single out anyone—not even billionaires.

You wouldn't want to single out a billionaire like Jeff Bezos, who pays a lower tax rate than a Boston public school teacher? You wouldn't want to single out a billionaire like Mark Zuckerberg, whose company Meta paid a tax rate of just 11.5 percent in 2023, despite making nearly \$40 billion in profits? You wouldn't want to single out a billionaire like Elon Musk, who is more focused on flying to Mars than making life better for working families here on Earth?

Those billionaires had better seats at Donald Trump's inauguration than Trump's own Cabinet members. Those billionaires dominate the American economy, and Republicans plan to give them more tax breaks.

This is the payout for Trump's "rich as hell donors," and Mr. Bessent is another billionaire ready to do the hard work of cutting taxes for every billionaire in America, himself included.

The top economic issue today is: How do we lower costs for families and build an economy that works, not just for the wealthy and the well connected, but an economy that works for everyone?

I am hammering out plans to make it a little easier for families to be able to pay their bills, to buy a home, and to build some financial security.

Trump's tax breaks for billionaires is the same old Republican playbook of trickle-down economics: Help the rich get richer, and leave everyone else behind.

But that is not the Trump administration's only bad economic idea. Mr. Bessent has been an advocate for deregulating Wall Street and letting big banks load up on risk. Deregulate Wall Street—yes, a lot of people remember how that approach brought our economy to its knees back in 2008. People who remember include the millions of people who lost their homes, the millions who lost their jobs, and the millions who lost their savings. And now, once again, President Trump wants to run the same economic play, and Mr. Bessent is the guy he has picked to do it.

We don't need less oversight of giant banks and Wall Street movers and shakers. Risk is building in the system. The too-big-to-fail banks are quietly taking on riskier investments. The shadowy private credit market has loaded up on highly leveraged loans. And after waves of catastrophic losses, the insurance industry is facing a reckoning that even climate change deniers can't ignore.

Without significant changes, another financial crash is coming. As we learned, those big crashes fall hardest on hard-working people who are just trying to make a living.

A billionaire willing to roll along on deregulation poses a threat to the economic well-being of every American, and a billionaire who supports more tax cuts for every single billionaire in America is not someone who is watching out for hard-working families.

For me, this is simple. I am ready to work together with President Trump's team wherever we agree to help working families. But I am also ready to fight like hell when Republicans pursue economic policies that load up the risk in our financial system or tax policies that mostly benefit billionaires.

I will vote no on Mr. Bessent to be the next Secretary of the Treasury, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

NOMINATION OF SEAN DUFFY

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam President, I rise in support of the nomination of Sean Duffy to serve as our next Secretary of Transportation.

Sean Duffy and I have known each other for many years and worked together in the Wisconsin delegation during our time in the House of Representatives.

As a Wisconsin native, Mr. Duffy is a former Congressman who represented Wisconsin's Seventh Congressional District from 2011 to 2019, and, in that time, we partnered on shared priorities for our constituents, including the St. Croix bridge in western Wisconsin.

You know, during his confirmation hearing before the Commerce Committee, I shared this story. It usually does not take an act of Congress to build a bridge, but in this case, it was needed to build a new bridge over the St. Croix River, connecting Wisconsin to Minnesota.

With help from Senators KLOBUCHAR, Kohl, and JOHNSON, Sean Duffy and I, without hesitation, whipped our respective caucuses and brought together a House majority necessary to pass legislation to replace the 80-year-old Stillwater Bridge. As Sean can attest, this was a decades-long battle, which resulted in a significant bipartisan win for our State and our region. It was not a matter of right or left, just what was good for our constituents, our economy, and our State.

Today, the St. Croix Crossing, which opened in 2017, has shortened traffic times, reduced congestion, and, most importantly, improved safety. This type of bipartisan work for the American people is what I expect to see from Sean Duffy as Secretary of Transportation. Our efforts show that when we work together, we get important things done.

And, as I told my colleagues on the Commerce Committee about the nominee, we haven't always agreed, and I am certain that will continue to be true. I will be the first to call out any efforts to roll back our "Buy America" rules or weaken safety or increase costs or cut funding for critical projects like the Blatnik Bridge in my State.

At the end of the day, I am confident that Sean Duffy is the right person for this job and will help deliver for Wisconsin families, businesses, and workers. He has committed to being a strong partner on strengthening "Buy