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COMMITTEE PRINT

FULL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING:
MARK-UP OF FISCAL YEAR 2025
BUDGET RECONCILIATION,
AND POSTAL-NAMING MEASURES

FOR THE
COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

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Documents are available at: docs.house.gov.

**FULL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING:
MARK-UP OF FISCAL YEAR 2025
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AND POSTAL-NAMING MEASURES**

Wednesday, April 30, 2025

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
Washington, D.C.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:07 a.m., in room HVC-210, U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, Hon. James Comer [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Comer, Jordan, Turner, Gosar, Foxx, Grothman, Cloud, Palmer, Higgins, Sessions, Biggs, Mace, Fallon, Donalds, Perry, Timmons, Burchett, Greene, Boebert, Luna, Burlison, Crane, Jack, McGuire, Gill, Norton, Lynch, Krishnamoorthi, Khanna, Mfume, Brown, Stansbury, Garcia, Frost, Lee, Casar, Crockett, Randall, Subramanyam, Ansari, Bell, Simon, Min, Pressley, and Tlaib.

Chairman COMER. The Committee will please come to order. A quorum is present.

Without objection, the Chair is authorized to declare a recess at any time.

Pursuant to Committee Rule (5)(b) and House Rule XI, Clause 2, the Chair may postpone further proceedings today on the question of approving any measure or matter or adopting an amendment on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered.

The Committee will continue to use electronic system for recorded votes on amendments and passage of the bills before the Committee. Of course, should any technical issues arise, which I do not anticipate, we will immediately transition to traditional roll call votes. Any procedural or motion related votes during today's markup will be dispensed with by a traditional roll call vote.

Before we begin, I would like to let our departing Ranking Member Gerry Connolly know that everyone here is praying for him. Our thoughts are with him and his family. It has been a pleasure to work with Gerry Connolly. We do not always agree, but I will tell you, I think he is a tremendous legislator. I think he is sincere about governing. He is sincere about trying to identify waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement in the Federal Government, which is what this Committee is all about, and I think that Ranking Member Connolly is a role model for what a good Member of

Congress should be. He fights for what he believes in, he is honest, and he tries to do what he thinks is best. And we all, on the Republican side of the aisle, appreciate and respect Ranking Member Connolly and wish him a speedy recovery.

Mr. BURCHETT. Mr. Chairman? Mr. Chairman? Over here.

Chairman COMER. Yes. Yes.

Mr. BURCHETT. Would it be all right if I led us in a word of prayer for Gerry?

Chairman COMER. Yes, please. I will yield to Mr. Burchett for a—

Mr. BURCHETT. Thank you.

Chairman COMER [continuing]. Word of prayer for Mr. Connolly.

Mr. BURCHETT. Bow our heads, please. Dear Lord, we ask blessings on our dear brother, Gerry, and we ask that your healing hand is upon him and his family, and we ask that you give wisdom to his physicians, and we just ask for his healing, and thank you, Lord, for bringing him into our lives. We do not agree on anything, but I love him like a brother, and I do, Lord. You know that. You know my heart. And I ask all these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Chairman COMER. Amen. Thank you. Now I will yield to Mr. Lynch for comments.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Burchett, thank you for your prayers. I want to thank all the Members of both sides of the aisle for your kindness and remembrance and prayers on behalf of Gerry Connolly. Gerry Connolly is still involved here, though, so, he is whispering in my ear. While I am in an interim position in his absence, he is very much engaged on the reconciliation process and thereafter.

His presence is still here, and I think he would have fully endorsed the part of Mr. Burchett's prayer that called upon God to give wisdom to Republicans. You know, ironically, we are here today on a hearing on Federal employees. Mr. Connolly has more Federal employees in his district than any other Member of Congress, so I know it pains him greatly not to be part of this process, but I hope that his presence and his love and his longtime advocacy on behalf of Federal employees has an impact on this hearing and on the votes that we will take during the course of this day. Gerry Connolly was not only an advocate for Federal employees, he was someone who nurtured Federal employees. You can see that in his own staff. He has many staff members, the Committee staff included, that came from various parts of government that Gerry had worked with over 20 years. As the Chairman said, he was legitimate and is a legitimate legislator in every aspect of that word.

I have been working with Gerry Connolly for almost 25 years. Gerry and I have done CODELs to Iraq and countless CODELs to Iraq, Afghanistan. We have done investigations on the army hospital, Walter Reed Hospital, back in the day, when we were fearful that they were not providing adequate care to our wounded military and veterans. He has been a real example, hopefully, to both sides of the aisle, and I just ask that his presence and his priorities and his spirit imbue all of us during this process.

And, again, I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and especially Mr. Burchett for his kind prayers on my friend's behalf. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. Our next item for consideration is the Oversight Committee's Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Continuing Resolution 14.

The clerk will please designate the Committee Print.

The CLERK. Oversight Committee Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the Committee Print shall be considered as read and open for amendment at any point.

Without objection, so ordered.

The Chair recognizes himself to offer an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

The clerk will please designate the amendment.

The CLERK. An amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Committee Print, offered by Mr. Comer of Kentucky.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read, and the substitute will be considered as original text for the purposes of further amendment.

I now recognize myself for 5 minutes for a statement on the Committee Print and the amendment.

Today, this Committee has a generational opportunity to fulfill its part of the House mandated charge to enact reforms to benefit the American people. This work is part of a larger effort led by President Trump to fundamentally change how the Federal Government operates. Last November, Democrats offered to provide "more of the same," but the American people rejected that and elected President Trump to a historic second term.

President Trump promised to change Washington, DC, and he has delivered on that promise during his first 100 days in office. House Republicans' budget takes action to further deliver on President Trump's America First Agenda. It provides the resources needed to secure our border, enforce our immigration laws and deport criminal illegal aliens. It grows our economy by reducing taxes for American families and small businesses. It encourages investment in the United States to create good paying jobs right here in the United States. It restores America's energy dominance by dismantling the radical left's Green New Deal scam, and empowering American energy producers. Republicans' budget restores peace through strength to provide our military with the resources it needs to protect our freedom, and our budget will make the government more efficient and more accountable.

Today, we are considering reforms within the Oversight Committee's jurisdiction that reduce Federal deficits by at least \$50 billion in 10 years. The cost reduction changes to the Federal Government the Committee will consider are part of the President's vision for enacting his legislative agenda and pass significant taxpayer savings into law. Congressional procedure, precedent, and tradition too often contribute to an ever-expanding Federal Government, while too little is done to shrink the administrative state or make the Federal bureaucracy more efficient. The budget reconciliation process, while imposing requirements and some limitations on cost-saving measures this Committee is considering, provides a rare opportunity to reverse that trajectory.

The Oversight and Government Reform Committee has very limited jurisdiction to help reduce the Federal budget deficit. Specifically, the Oversight Committee is empowered to pursue civil service reforms, including Federal employee benefits and reigning in the influence of partisan and unaccountable government employee unions. Such Federal employee retirement benefits far outpace the retirement benefits that most Americans enjoy in the private sector. The Congressional Budget Office issued an April 2024 report indicating that, “Benefits for Federal workers cost 43 percent more per hour work on average than benefits for private sector workers.” Forty-three dollars an hour more. Furthermore, the CBO notes that, “Benefits also constituted a larger share of total compensation for Federal workers, 40 percent, than for workers in the private sector, which was 30 percent.”

World-class employment benefits provided to Federal employees are well known, which can include 11 paid holidays; various incentives and awards; health, life, and long-term care insurance; flexible spending accounts; student loan repayment and forgiveness plans; generous leave and workplace flexibilities; and childcare, professional development, and commuter subsidies. The simple truth is that a significant amount of the cost associated with all of these benefits are funded by hardworking taxpayers in the private sector, and increasingly now, Federal Government borrowing.

The legislation before us today advances important budgetary reforms that will save taxpayers’ money. Their proposed reforms also account for some unique employee situations brought to this Committee’s attention. We have, therefore, made some changes to avoid unintended consequences, contrary to clear public interest. This includes key exemptions to maintain public services provided by certain frontline Federal employee groups, such as law enforcement officers, Border Patrol officers, air traffic controllers, nuclear material couriers, and firefighters who typically have shortened Federal careers due to mandatory retirement rules. Taken together, these reforms will reduce the deficit by \$50.9 billion while moving us toward the more accountable Federal Government the American people demand and deserve.

I now recognize my colleague, Mr. Lynch, for his opening statement.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The real reason we are here today is because congressional Republicans have instructed this Committee to target our Federal workforce with approximately \$50 billion in funding cuts regardless of the impact on hardworking, loyal Federal employees and the critical services that they provide to the American people. In just a hundred days, we have witnessed this Administration lay off more than 200,000 probationary employees. And we talk about generational change, we just fired the next generation of Federal workers—leading public health experts, veterans, and other critical positions. The Trump Administration has coerced 75,000 civil servants to resign. They replaced 50,000 nonpartisan civil servants with political appointees and illegally terminated nonpartisan independent oversight by Federal watchdogs, our Inspectors General. This partisan bill threatens to further undermine the Federal workforce by reducing the take-home pay, the benefits, and workforce protections of 2.4 million

Federal employees, most of whom are middle-class Americans, and a third of whom are military veterans.

Americans did not vote for Donald Trump to do that. They did not vote to have Donald Trump cut 80,000 employees at the VA who are taking care of our veterans. This is more of the same, an unprecedented assault on a political purge of the civil service. If this legislation becomes law, almost every Federal employee hired in 2013 or earlier, under the Federal Employee Retirement System, or FERS, would see a nearly four-percent pay cut by forcing them to contribute more to retirement.

The Federal Employee Retirement System annuity supplement, the monthly payment for retirees before they are eligible for Social Security at age 62 would be eliminated for anybody not actively receiving the supplemental payment at the time this bill is enacted or does not meet specific exemptions. Federal workers like letter carriers, VA hospital nurses, and food inspectors who have committed decades to the job and are eligible to retire, would not be able to receive this vital payment to make ends meet.

This legislation would also change the annuity formula to base most employees' annual retirement payments on their highest 5 years of earnings instead of the highest 3, an outright theft of earned benefits that would cost each Federal employee thousands of dollars per year. A particularly egregious provision in the bill would force any newly hired Federal employee to accept at-will employment with no protections, or face an additional 5 percent retirement contribution on top of the 4.4 percent already required. So, firefighters, Capitol police officers, air traffic controllers, and other Federal workers who choose to remain under the merit base system with employment protections would be forced to contribute nearly 10 percent of their paycheck toward retirement, at the same time that we are actually reducing the amount of that retirement.

This legislation would also require current and former Federal employees to pay a \$350 filing fee for any appeal before the Merit System Protection Board. So, in order to exercise your rights as an employee under this system, under the Merit Protection Board, employees would have to pay \$350 to have their rights protected, which would create a financial barrier for employees seeking justice, particularly for low-income or recently separated workers.

Despite the claims of this Administration, Federal workers are not leeches on the system, but they are hardworking, dedicated public servants who are paid about 25 percent less than their private sector counterparts. A strong non-partisan Federal workforce is fundamental to the functioning of a democratic government. These dedicated workers deserve our respect and so much more. Like most Americans, Federal workers face increased costs for groceries and housing and economic uncertainty because of President Trump's reckless tax and tariff agenda is undermining their economic position. The Trump tariffs are estimated to cost American households close to \$5,000 per year. That would be the largest tax increase since 1968, and that is coming. That is coming.

Republicans are also advocating for a tax regime that will actually increase the Federal deficit by more than \$4 trillion. You talk about borrowing. In order to fund the Republican tax cut, they are borrowing \$4 trillion to give a tax cut to some of the richest Ameri-

cans. There is no fiscal responsibility in that. Worst of all, they are seeking to offset these costs by gutting \$800 billion from Medicaid programs. My Democratic colleagues and I do not support that, nor do the American people. Oversight Democrats stand with struggling families, we oppose corruption and abuse of power, and we are committed to solving our Nation's crises without sacrificing the wellbeing of our country's civil servants.

In closing, I urge all of my colleagues to reject this legislation and instead work toward a budget that respects American workers and the vital services that they provide. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman?

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Ms. Norton.

Ms. NORTON. I strongly oppose this reconciliation bill, including the Committee's portion. Republicans are taking away Medicaid, food assistance, pay benefits, and protections for Federal employees, and other critical Federal funding and programs to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations. The Trump Administration and Congress have launched unprecedented attacks on Federal employees, Federal contract workers, Federal agencies, Federal programs, the rule of law, and the Constitution, among other things. Most recently, the Administration stripped Federal employees of their collective bargaining rights. The Administration and Republicans in Congress are trying to dismantle much of the Federal Government, gut the Federal workforce, and fill Federal jobs with political loyalists, in violation of the Constitution, statutes, and regulations.

Federal employees who provide invaluable services to the American people deserve praise, not derision, cruelty, fear, chaos, and illegal firings. These actions would and have deprived the Federal Government of expertise and experience. This harms the services of the Federal Government that the Federal Government provides to all Americans. Instead of attacking Federal employees, this Committee should be considering bills to support the Federal workforce, such as my bill to combat Federal pay compression. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentlelady yields back. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Turner from Ohio.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I strongly support President Trump's efforts and voted for the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation effort in the House. I will be opposing this Committee's bill today. I gave this Committee a prior heads-up, prior to this markup, of my opposition to this bill and sought changes to this bill. I do not believe that this bill represents Republican values, and I do not believe that it represents American values.

I believe that making changes to pension retirement benefits in the middle of someone's employment is wrong. Changing the rules, especially when someone has already been vested in their benefits, is wrong. Employee benefits are not a gift, they are earned. When someone goes to work every day, what they believe that they are earning includes the benefits both that they earn in their wages, but also the benefits that they are told that they are receiving. I have fought to try to get the Delphi Salaried Retirees' pension ben-

efits restored that were taken away from them during the Obama Administration, and I am not going to fight to have one group's pension benefits restored and then vote to take away another group's pension benefits. And I understand the need for reform, and certainly we can have changes that occur in benefits for new hires, we can certainly look prospectively. But I do think that for current employees, to change the rules for people in the middle of the game is wrong.

I have talked to enough people on the House Floor that I do think that this will not be included in the final bill, and that this bill ultimately will have to be changed if it is going to be included in the ultimate budget reconciliation. So, I will be voting no, and I certainly hope that this process as it goes through will be changed because I do not think that it is fair and it represents either Republican values or American values. I think that we, as a party, stand up for pensions, and I do not think that we should say to the American public that we will change someone's pension in the middle of the process of their employment. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes Ms. Crockett, then Mrs. Luna is next.

Ms. CROCKETT. I actually just wanted to say that I agree, something that I very rarely have an opportunity to do on this Committee. And I actually want to applaud the Congressman, Congressman Turner, for laying this out in a very plain way that is not about partisanship, that it is simply about right versus wrong. And I think as we go through reconciliation as a whole, we should be looking at what is right, and it should not be about what somebody told us we had to do. It should be about listening to our constituents and doing what is fair and just. I think that that is who we are supposed to be in the House. We are supposed to look after the people that elected us and just do right by Americans.

So, honestly, because I very rarely get an opportunity to agree with someone from across the aisle in this Committee, I just wanted to say that I absolutely agree, and it is not just agreeing, I agree for the same reasons. A lot of times when you see "no" votes on the Floor, sometimes it is for completely different reasons. But this is about fairness and about doing what is right for people, and I think that we all on this Committee should take a step back, and as we go through this budget process, we should absolutely think about what is right to do for the people.

So, thank you so much, Congressman Turner, for eloquently laying this out, and I will yield.

Mr. LYNCH. Will the gentlelady yield to Mr. Garcia?

Ms. CROCKETT. Yes, I will.

Mr. LYNCH. OK. Thank you. Thank you.

Mr. GARCIA. Thank you, and, Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to make some opening comments as well. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

I also just want to start today, and I want to thank both our Ranking Member, our interim Ranking Member, and our Chairman for the remarks on our Ranking Member, Gerry Connolly. I also just want to add and send love and appreciation to Ranking Member Connolly. He is a mentor, I think, to all on this Committee, and I know we all wish him a strong recovery and are sending his fam-

ily a lot of love. Ranking Member Connolly, of course, cares about how government works and has been one of the most effective lawmakers in supporting our Federal workers here in Congress, and I just want to wish him and his family the absolute best.

Now, I also want to start out today by laying out what is happening here today. It is clear that the Majority on this Committee, most of them, are part of a massive effort to rig the economy against the American people, and I want to spell this out as clearly as we can. Here is the actual deal the Majority is offering: \$7 trillion in deficit-based finance tax cuts for the wealthiest in this country, huge giveaways to Elon Musk and his friends, and, in exchange, of course, working people will get hit with \$880 billion in cuts that will decimate Medicaid. Eighty million Americans could lose their healthcare. Low-income people, the disabled, long-term care for the elderly, substance abuse treatment are all on the chopping block. We also know that Medicaid covers 41 percent of all births in this country. Millions of women would lose coverage, and that is not a deal anyone should support. We should be a country where we take care of each other.

Now, my Democratic colleagues and I actually believe in making billionaires and big corporations pay their fair share. We believe in making sure that hardworking people get healthcare and food and an affordable place to live, even if it means standing up to the powerful, but let us be clear. The rip-off is not the only thing that this bill does. Here in the Oversight Committee, House Republicans are trying to continue Elon's war on to our hardworking Federal workers. They want to slash pay, they want to slash benefits, all for hardworking public servants.

Before coming to Congress, I was mayor of my city for 8 years. We had over 6,000 employees. They were hardworking, they took care of their families, and I can tell you from experience, you cannot build an effective organization without respecting your employees and providing them opportunities to grow. You cannot also keep talent if you do not pay people what they are worth. This committee needs to stop supporting the DOGE agenda and the Trump agenda. We need to say no to Elon Musk and Trump's attempts to sabotage the programs and agencies that people rely on.

This Committee should be investigating powerful people, not enabling them. We should take on and stop the Trump agenda, not further it. We should be investigating the impact of tariffs. We should hold hearings on reducing the cost of living and issues that matter to all Americans, and we should stand up for the rule of law. We should be investigating the people who are profiting off our government, jeopardizing our national security, and harming our country, and we need to stand up for working people inside or outside our government. We should defeat this bill and create a government that actually helps people. Thank you, and with that, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. I now recognize, to speak on the ANS, Mrs. Luna from Florida.

Mrs. LUNA. Thank you, Chairman. First of all, I am extremely proud to have this reconciliation package being marked up today, and I would like to say that the language placed in Section 90004 of this package specifically is a provision that I contributed to in

the reconciliation package, and it is not about ideology. It is about the budgetary responsibility of protecting American taxpayers from spiraling entitlement costs tied to the Federal workforce.

So, first and foremost, for those of you who have maybe ever served, there was a point in time when the military had the option of, and new incoming troops had the option of, actually adopting the new retirement program. So, instead of just being 20 years automatic retirement, it shifted to something like a 401(k). What this provision specifically allows, is for new hires to either opt into a traditional first protection, where they have the option of increasing their personal contribution by five percent, or if they choose not to, having access to more of a cost-efficient personal track. That is important because a lot of people are saying that this is somehow going to impact the current retirement system, and that is simply not the case. This structure is going to incentivize and create actuarial beneficial dynamic changes for the Treasury, allowing the CBO to reduce the deficit by over \$4.5 billion over the next decade.

So, I understand everyone here is representing their districts, their constituents, and what I can tell you is, first and foremost, it is really important that the facts and the evidence is out there. We are not trying to attack people's retirements. In fact, we are doing quite the opposite. And if you have a runaway train of debt, ultimately understand that that can impact everything from Social Security to these retirement packages. So, we have to be fiscally responsible. Thank you, Chairman.

And I will also say this. Unfortunately, right now, because of the amount of, I think, partisanship in regard to this topic, I think a lot of people are genuinely scared about DOGE. And the fact is that DOGE is actually doing right by all of the American people by ensuring that future programs, future generations are not left on the fiscal hook of debt, but also to have the opportunity and access to the American dream. So, I understand what everyone here is trying to do in regard to their constituencies, but it is very important that we have those facts out there.

So, thank you, Chairman. I yield this time, and I urge all of my colleagues not just to support this amendment, but also to support this reconciliation package.

Chairman COMER. Thank you, and does any other Member wish to speak on the ANS? Ms. Randall?

Ms. RANDALL. Thank you, Mr. Chair. You know, as I have said in this Committee before, I have the honor of representing 27,000 Federal workers who continue to tell me daily and weekly how traumatizing it is to be disparaged by this Administration and congressional Republicans who continue to say that they are looking for waste and fraud and abuse and people who are not doing their jobs. Certainly, in every workforce, there are folks who rise above and go above and beyond and there are folks who do not. But the individuals who are serving our country, the Department of Defense at Naval Base Kitsap, and the Intermediate Maintenance Facility, Puget Sound, Naval Shipyard, are doing an essential service to protect our mission and our national security.

We also have, like everyone else, postal workers, and we have Forest Service, and we have folks who want to deliver results for the American people but are feeling attacked regularly, and this

bill continues those attacks. This Committee is proposing to cut retirement benefits and pay for our Federal employees so that folks like Elon Musk can have higher tax cuts. And regarding Section 90004 and the assertion that it is giving individuals options for their retirement, what it does is use the carrot of not lowering your take-home pay to convince employees to go at-will and to lose the benefits that they have to challenge workforce discriminations and decisions that they would otherwise be protected from, or at least have options to pursue corrections. They are shifting folks from a regular employee to at-will employee in this change of retirement benefits, and I think we cannot let that be swept under the rug.

The stories that I hear from my neighbors, like a Federal Head Start employee for 23 years who got fired, she deserves the ability to pursue an appeal, to pursue being reinstated in her job when we know we have a childcare crisis. Another of my neighbors in Shelton, a disabled veteran and the spouse of an active-duty Air Force service member, lost her job with USDA, and the spouse told me, we are real people who are suffering and we just want things to go back to normal, and they are asking me to do everything I can to reverse what she calls a betrayal.

I met with Forest Service workers yesterday. We are already having a hard time recruiting folks in to the Forest Service to be able to do the important thinning and maintenance of Federal lands to prevent wildfires, and they have mandatory retirement early because of the dangers of their job as firefighters. But without these supplemental annuity payments, they are just going to lose folks into the private sector and other fields because the retirement benefits are a big part of how we have been able to recruit and retain workforce into these important timber industry jobs. Federal firefighters who work for Sub Base Bangor have the same issue.

Under this Administration's policies, we are already losing critical and talented workforce. And if my colleagues plow forward with the provisions of this amendment in the nature of a substitute, this bill, we are going to continue losing folks, but apparently the Majority does not care. And the cuts to Federal workers are just one piece of a larger bill that they are working on, a larger reconciliation bill that would cut \$880 billion from Medicaid that will impact folks like my sister born with complex disabilities. I know how important these Federal programs are to my neighbors, to my constituents, to my family, and to people like them, and I will do everything that I can to fight this callous and cruel policy-making, and I urge my colleagues to vote against the amendment. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentlelady yields back. The Chair recognizes Mr. Bell.

Mr. BELL. Thank you, Mr. Chair and Ranking Member. This Committee Print advances proposals that would slash pay, eliminate benefits, and undermine longstanding protections for Federal employees. I stand with working-class families. These are working-class families, and, therefore, I cannot support this proposal. It is as simple as that. It is not about a Democrat or a Republican talking point. It is about standing with working-class families, period.

This Administration is systematically gutting the Federal workforce and replacing dedicated civil servants with unqualified DOGE representatives. Their abrupt and legally questionable appointments are undermining the great work that these employees do every single day. And I think that as a rule of thumb, again, regardless of what letter is in front of your name, we stand with working-class families. We stand with supporting and upholding the values that make this country what it is, supporting our most vulnerable, and I think that is what this Committee needs to keep in mind. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. Does any other Member seek recognition on the amendment in the nature of a substitute? Ms. Stansbury?

Ms. STANSBURY. All right. Well, good morning, everyone. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think these markups are complicated and sometimes difficult to explain and understand because they get into technical details. So, I want to try to break it down a little bit and, actually, with our current acting Ranking Member, maybe get a little bit into the details. So, let me zoom way out here to talk about the entire enterprise that the GOP is engaged in right now, and to lay down some facts.

So, first of all, what is important to understand is that over the last couple of months, the President has transmitted to the Hill a list of asks, and they really focus on making permanent tax breaks that were originally put into place in 2017 that are about to sunset. So, these tax breaks are for billionaires, millionaires, mega corporations, and it is going to cost \$7 trillion. And to pay for it, they want to try to offset some of those costs because our friends across the aisle are trying to claim that they are being fiscally responsible.

But let us be clear, the math does not math because the offsets that they are seeking only add up to about \$1.5 trillion to \$2 trillion. So, if you do the math, 7 minus 2 equals 5, which is why this bill, the big bill that we are talking about, does not actually reduce the debt or the deficit. It actually will blow a hole through it by increasing debt spending by \$5 trillion, and when you add it all up over 30 years, we are talking over \$30 trillion in new spending for the United States' government. So, first of all, do not buy the baloney that this is somehow going to balance the debt. This is going to blow a giant hole in the debt.

Now, let us talk about what is happening in this committee. So, they passed the instructions out of the Senate, came back to the House, very confusing. The Senate and the House Republicans could not agree on which package to go with, so they passed it all, so here we are now. Those instructions have gone down to each committee, and each committee now has to break it down in its own jurisdiction, so this Committee can only work on things that are in its jurisdiction. We are in the Oversight Committee. Our jurisdiction is overseeing the Federal Government. And so, this Committee has been instructed, through those resolution instructions, to cut funding to supposedly offset cuts. So, where are they trying to find those cuts? They are trying to find those cuts on our Federal workers' backs.

Now, let us be clear. Over the last 100 days, Donald Trump has fired over 200,000 probationary employees. Over 75,000 people

have been forced to retire or leave the Federal Government. And now they are talking about taking away significant retirement benefits and turning the Federal workforce over to an at-will workforce. What that means is, is that they want to strip away the protections for our Federal workers so they can be fired at-will at any moment, OK? So that is actually what is inside this reconciliation piece that is in front of the Committee today.

And if you do not, as a Federal employee, elect to be at-will, if this piece of legislation passes, you are going to have your retirement taxed, essentially, an additional five percent. So, that means your pay is going to get cut unless you elect to be fireable. Is that correct, Mr. Lynch?

Mr. LYNCH. That is essentially correct, yes, absolutely.

Ms. STANSBURY. So, basically, what this package is doing is extortion. This is called extortion. This is in the vein of trying to say that they are going to balance the budget, which they are not because it is still going to cost the American people \$5 trillion to pass this overall tax package for billionaires. And, by the way, these trillionaires are going to get an additional, let us say, \$300,000 a year off of their taxes, while the rest of us are going to actually see prices go up with tariffs, the cost-of-living expenses, all of these issues. They are going to use this piece of the reconciliation package to further punish the 2.4 million Federal employees who provide your Social Security, who help with your VA benefits, who make sure that your Medicaid is taken care of.

This is all about cutting Federal workers, punishing Federal workers, making life harder for Americans, and destroying the Federal workforce. And I strongly oppose it in every single way, every piece of what is in this piece of the reconciliation package, and I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. Any further discussion on the ANS? The gentlelady yields back. Any further discussion? Seeing none—

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Chairman?

Chairman COMER. Yes.

Mr. LYNCH. I request unanimous consent. I have here a letter from the National Association of Retired Federal Employees in opposition to this bill.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. LYNCH. I have an amendment.

Chairman COMER. Yes, we are going to start with the amendment, so the Chair recognizes Mr. Lynch.

Mr. LYNCH. OK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have an amendment at the desk.

Chairman COMER. Yes. The clerk will distribute the amendment to all Members.

[Pause.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will designate the amendment.

The CLERK. An amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, as offered by Mr. Lynch of Massachusetts.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes to explain his amendment.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I want to thank Mr. Turner for defending Federal workers and his own employees as they would be affected adversely by this legislation. Every Member—every Member—their employees will also be affected in a similar way. Every Federal employee in their districts will be affected, will be harmed by this bill. In the interest of the Federal workforce that remains free of partisan influence and political cronyism, my amendment would strike the section of the bill that seeks to force new Federal workers to surrender their due process rights and their employee protections, and accept a new job classification as “at-will employees, subject to termination for any reason.”

Now, as a former union president and as a labor attorney—an employment attorney, I just want to make sure people understand what “at-will” means. An at-will employee can be fired for any reason or for no reason. So, here is the President. Now, obviously, he would like to have partisans on his side brought into government. The sad fact is that all those people can be fired for no reason. For any reason. So, it will create this massive turnover if people are even willing to come on to the Federal payroll without the benefits that they are going to get and with the changes that are being made here today.

The bill before us presents incoming Federal employees with the Hobson’s choice. You can elect to give away all your rights—all your rights—all your basic job protections that prevent you from being arbitrarily fired or have your retirement contribution rate go up by an additional five percent of your pay. That is on top of the 4.4 percent that is already coming out of your paycheck, so it approximates 10 percent of your pay if you want your rights. If you want to have rights as an employee, you need to pay all this additional money, and that is for the duration of your employment.

Alternatively, you can agree to waive your employee rights. First of all, every Federal employee has to give up their right to strike, so, even if you wanted to stop work, you cannot do that as a Federal employee. Statutorily, Federal employees are prohibited from engaging in strike. So, if you thought your job was unsafe, you got to keep working. You can grieve. Well, unless you do this, unless you give up all your rights, then you need to shut up and keep working for less, and your employer can just fire you for no reason. For any reason that comes into their head, you are gone. Considering that entry-level Federal workers earn an annual starting salary as low as \$30,000, the majority of new employees will essentially be forced to relinquish their constitutional and statutory job protections just to keep more income in their pockets for their families.

Mr. Chairman, the primary purpose of this provision appears to be to advance the implementation of Schedule F, President Trump’s government-wide plan to strip Federal workers of their civil service protections, arbitrarily fire them, and replace them with political loyalists. This shameless attempt to politicize our Federal workforce is already the subject of multiple legal challenges brought by a coalition of Federal employee unions and pro-

democracy advocates with the strong support of the Democratic House Litigation Working Group, which I am a member of.

The statute governing the Federal workforce, the bipartisan Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, enshrined the merit system protection that Federal employees should be protected against arbitrary action, personal favoritism, and coercion for partisan political purposes. Schedule F and the at-will provisions included in this bill fly in the face of that purpose. This provision is also an additional attack on Federal workforce that, out of duty, already sacrifices critical rights enjoyed by their private sector counterparts. Every new Federal employee swears an oath to serve the American people and carry out their public service now, knowing that they are expressly prohibited by statute from participating in any strike or work stoppages or asserting the right to strike and even belonging to a union that asserts the right to strike against the Federal Government, a violation is a felony and punishable by imprisonment.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support my amendment, to strike this egregious provision from the bill, and preserve the dignity and the independence and respect that we all should have for our Federal employees. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back, and I recognize myself for a brief statement in opposition of the amendment.

I do appreciate the length of the amendment. Just two words and a number. I appreciate that, I sincerely do. I did not have to spend a lot of time reading that, but I oppose the Lynch Amendment Number 1, which would significantly reduce deficit reduction in the Committee's legislation by over \$4.5 billion and result in the underlying Print conflicting with our reconciliation instructions and comprising the legislative privileges. For that reason, I strongly oppose the Lynch amendment.

Do any other Members wish to speak on Lynch Amendment Number 1? Ms. Stansbury from New Mexico, you are recognized.

Ms. STANSBURY. All right. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would love to just ask—

Chairman COMER. Reset the clock, please. Go ahead.

Ms. STANSBURY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would love to just ask a few questions about the amendment. So, again, zooming out a little bit, there is a lot to not like about this portion of the reconciliation package. As we said, I think it is an all-out attack on the Federal workforce, and it kind of cuts at the heart of some of the major reasons why people stay in Federal service, because it is not only them serving and doing their duty for the American people, but also you are making sure that you have a good retirement, you are taking care of your family.

And also, we want to make sure—one of the things that I think is really important for the American people to understand is that after Richard Nixon resigned, there were major overhauls done to the Federal service because of the corruption and the ways in which Nixon used the Federal workforce and service to carry out his own personal political vendetta. There were major reforms in the 1970s to the Federal workforce rules and laws because we wanted to protect Federal workers from being used as political agents of whoever was in power. And so, the idea of trying to con-

vert Federal workers to at-will undoes all of the good government reforms that were put into place in the 1970s after Nixon to protect the Federal workforce. Is that correct, Mr. Lynch?

Mr. LYNCH. That is absolutely correct. Yes. Thank you.

Ms. STANSBURY. And so, it is really important to understand that that is why those protections are there, and the whole point of trying to convert people to at-will is, again, to make it easier to make the Federal workforce your political arm, and we do not want that. We are not an autocracy, we are a democracy, and we want to make sure that our Federal employees are protected from whatever whims of whoever is serving in power. So, I do want to ask though, Mr. Chairman, you said you oppose this amendment because of its impacts to the budget. Can you explain to me how does not allowing Federal workers to be forced into an at-will situation affect the Federal budget?

Chairman COMER. We have budget instructions. We are following through with the budget instructions. We have been very transparent about what this Committee was going to do within our jurisdiction of budget reconciliation. This is our bill, and it is self-explanatory.

Ms. STANSBURY. No, but I do not understand—so, Mr. Lynch's amendment is to strike Section 90004, which is the provision about at-will work. How does that affect the budget?

Chairman COMER. The employees who choose to not be at-will have to pay higher contribution rates.

Ms. STANSBURY. Say that again, please.

Chairman COMER. The employees who choose not to be at-will have to pay higher contribution rates.

Ms. STANSBURY. And how much money are you saying this will generate for the Federal Government, or savings?

Chairman COMER. The Congressional Budget Office says \$4.5 billion.

Ms. STANSBURY. Over what period of time?

Chairman COMER. A decade.

Ms. STANSBURY. A decade?

Chairman COMER. Ten years.

Ms. STANSBURY. OK. So, the idea here is that you—

Chairman COMER. Let me interrupt you. We are trying to—

Ms. STANSBURY. No, Mr. Chairman, I understand that.

Chairman COMER [continuing]. Make savings here, and all you do is criticize.

Mr. LYNCH. It is the gentlelady's time.

Chairman COMER. And you act like there is no—

Mr. LYNCH. The gentlelady's time.

Chairman COMER. You act like there is no—

Ms. STANSBURY. No. I am asking you a question—

Chairman COMER [continuing]. Fiscal crisis here.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Chairman, it is the gentlelady's time.

Ms. STANSBURY. I am just asking the question about the monetary offset of at-will employees. So, the idea is here that you are going to generate a few billion dollars over 10—

Chairman COMER. A few billion dollars. A few billion dollars here, a few billion dollars there.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Chairman, is it million or billion? Is it million or billion?

Ms. STANSBURY [continuing]. Over 10 years by taking away Federal benefits and making the Federal workforce fireable, undoing all of the good government reforms after Richard Nixon's corruption. I just want to clarify, that is what you are saying. Cool. OK. I think we got it. Thanks. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. Any other Members seek recognition on the Lynch amendment? Mr. Bell.

Mr. BELL. Thank you, Mr. Chair. The problem with this bill is that it does not offer Federal employees a real choice. It forces them into a lose-lose situation, which weakens the very protections that ensure fairness and due process. This package is literally a betrayal of the middle class, and as I said before, I think our litmus test is, do our proposals support working families or not?

In Missouri alone, these proposals threaten the rights, healthcare, and financial security of thousands of Federal workers. And let us be clear, in my district, Missouri's 1st District, over 186,000 people rely on Medicaid, and under Republican budget plans, their healthcare is at risk. And so, again, we need to stand with working class families, and these proposals are an attack on working class families. It is pretty straightforward. I would yield my time back to Rep. Stansbury or the Ranking Member.

Mr. LYNCH. I thank the gentleman. Again, the gentleman is on point with the, first of all, the impact of this on Federal employees and the costs that this will incur in terms of performance at the Federal level. Right now, we are in competition with the private sector, but through loyalty, through patriotism, in the case of the VA, about a third of our workers at the VA are veterans themselves. When I go through the Brockton VA in my district, which I do often, I ask them, were you in the military? More often than not, the answer is yes, and then they proudly tell me what branch of the service they were in and when they served. And they also express the spirit—esprit de corps—the patriotism, and the obligation that they feel toward wounded veterans. All of that is wrapped up in being a Federal employee at the VA and some of the other departments and agencies where Federal employees work each and every day.

So, the President has proposed that we are going to go back to, I think it is 1979 in terms of the number of people working at the VA, so he wants to cut 80,000 people from the VA. Now, because of the high number of veterans we have at the VA, out of that 80,000 people he wants to cut—that is what his budget resolution anticipates—27,000 of the people that he is firing at the VA are veterans themselves. So, all of this, this bill here today is just in furtherance of that same mission.

And again, I appreciate the gentleman from Ohio, Mr. Turner, standing up for his workers at the VA. I just hope every Member here is willing to do that. I understand the goal of savings and of balancing the budget, but this is not the way you do it. You do not go after people at the VA. We had the Inspector General for the VA do a whole survey. So, there are, like, 86 major VA medical centers across the country, and we asked him, give us a report card on how we are doing with our veterans. He came back and he said

two things. He said, No. 1, 80 percent of the hospitals that I have visited need a medical director. You need to hire a medical director, and he said 86 percent of the hospitals that I visited, you need more nurses. They are the backbone of our healthcare system.

So, what did Mr. Trump do first day in office? Announced 2,400 cuts, 2,400 people laid off at the VA, and 80,000 more to come. So, our veterans are waiting longer for appointments, there are fewer people caring for them, and this bill is in furtherance of that same mission. We used to agree on stuff on veterans. We do not anymore, and I miss the support that we used to have, bipartisanship for our veterans, and, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. Any other Member seek recognition on Lynch Amendment Number 1? Ms. Crockett from Texas.

Ms. CROCKETT. Thank you so much, Mr. Chair. You know, walking in today, I did not really know how I felt or what I would do because as people asked me about how I can get so passionate in this Committee about certain topics. I recently had an opportunity to talk to a group of people in Las Vegas, actually last weekend. And there was a woman who was almost in tears as she told me about the number of family members that have been fired from the Federal Government. And she said, Rep. Crockett, you give us so much hope and I do not understand how people are so callous toward Federal workers. And I explained to her, I cannot really understand the callousness either, but I can tell you that my passion lies in the fact that my mother has given almost 40 years to the Federal Government.

In March, it would be 40 years that my mom has worked for Department of Defense. She has worked for Navy, she has worked at Walter Reed, she has worked for the IRS, she has worked for AFRICOM, she has worked for the post office, and doing that hard, honest work as we consistently attack Federal workers. We call them lazy. We call them dumb. We try to pretend as if they are not taking care of the very people that elected us. But my mom graduated from college at Washington University at the age of 19 after receiving a full ride, and she decided that what she would do is dedicate her life to this country. And I wish that we would find an ounce of courage that my mom and so many other Federal workers have and just decide that we are going to dedicate ourselves to service and not just say that we are public servants, but actually do the work of being public servants.

So, let me tell you that this amendment is not going to do anything that you all claim is going to do. You claim that this is about money, when honestly, as far as I can tell, this is only an admission that what has been done under this Administration has been unlawful the entire time. This is only an avenue to make sure that when and if another rogue tyrant decides that they want to enter the White House, they can go and get rid of as many people as they want to, and they will not have any recourse in the courts.

The fact that you had to put this in here tells me that you all absolutely know that these firings of these workers has been unlawful, and honestly, it has been simply inconvenient for so many of you. But I can tell you that the only people that are going to be hurt are the people that you are servicing, even if you can tell me

that the CBO tells us that maybe—they can tell me it is \$50 billion or however many billions of dollars over a number of years. What the CBO is not telling us is how many people are not going to get their Social Security, how many people may die because they do not get the services that they need at the VA, how many people are not going to get their SNAP benefits because there is not going to be anybody there.

As we have had hearing after hearing about people complaining about the post office and not receiving their mail, and so many of our seniors rely on their checks to come through the mail to make sure that they can keep a roof over their head, that is the part of the story that the CBO numbers are not going to tell. And the last time that I checked, no matter if you are a Democrat or a Republican, you have got somebody in your district that is relying on these services.

This is about hurting people. This is about getting rid of people that are too inconvenient for an administration that does not want to keep our food safe at the FDA as they are firing people. This is about an administration that does not want to have any oversight or anybody reporting back and telling you that our food is unsafe, telling you about the diseases that are coming through, and basically talking about the overall incompetence. If you do not have anybody that is at work, then yes, you do not have to worry about whether or not people who, say, are trying to go and get education, whether or not they are going to actually be able to fill out their FAFSA and get that funding that they need.

So, at the end of the day, if you cannot really explain to me how this is going to help your constituents, I do not understand why we are talking about it because, again, we were not elected by Donald Trump or JD Vance or Elon Musk. We were elected by the people of our districts, and those are the only people that we should be discussing as it relates to the policy changes that we bring about in this Committee, and I will yield.

Chairman COMER. Does any other Member seek recognition on Lynch amendment No. 1?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the question is on the amendment offered by Mr. Lynch from Massachusetts.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it. The amendment is not agreed to.

Mr. LYNCH. I request a roll call vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

For what purpose does the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Perry, seek recognition?

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

Chairman COMER. The clerk will distribute the amendment to all Members. The clerk will designate the amendment.

The CLERK. An amendment to the amendment in the nature of substitute to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Com-

mittee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, as offered by Mr. Perry of Pennsylvania.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes to explain the Perry amendment.

Mr. PERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Three weeks ago, this was passed in this very Committee. So, I am bringing it back around so we can consider it in the proposal before. So, this amendment requires Federal employee unions to reimburse Federal agencies for their use of agency or taxpayer resources and official time spent each quarter. Federal agencies will assess public sector unions a fee to utilize their resources, such as office space, parking space, equipment expenses incurred while on union time and any official union time used by labor representatives affiliated with these organizations. American taxpayers would be absolutely shocked to learn that Federal employees are paid for work hours while supporting public sector unions rather than the agency operations, missions, and programs they were actually hired to support in the first place. They are not doing the work that they were hired to do. They are doing work in furtherance of their own personal and organizational goals, and that is fine. Just the question is, who should be paying for that?

According to OPM, official time logged by Federal employees can be used for lobbying Congress, alongside allowing certain employees to spend 100 percent of their time handling union representation functions while still being paid by Federal agencies to do Federal agency work. In 2019, before President Biden halted OPM tracking reporting of official time, it was reported that employees across the Federal Government were paid \$135 million to do 2.6 million hours of union work while on the clock at their other government jobs that they were actually hired to do, forcing the American taxpayer to foot the bill for Federal Union organizing is outrageous and absurd.

It is quite simple. If Federal employees and resources are going to be used for union tasks, the union should have to pay for that, not the taxpayers. American taxpayers are paying government employees to do a job, not the bidding and strategizing of their organized bargaining unit. According to CBO, this amendment would generate \$130 million in revenue over 10 years. I am simply asking the Members of this Committee to vote at least exactly like they did 3 weeks ago. And of course, my friends on the other side of the aisle, if they have finally seen the light and realize that they have come here to support their constituents and taxpayers as opposed to the special interest in Washington, they can vote with us, too. With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time and encourage a positive or affirmative vote.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes Ranking Member Lynch.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Perry's statement—his amendment, rather—would require agencies to assess fees to public sector labor organizations for use of agency resources, including office space, parking spaces, equipment, and other expenses while performing non-agency business. This amendment would also

require agencies to charge public sector labor organizations fees for any time an agency employee who is a labor representative spends performing union business while on the job. The section is substantially similar to Representative Perry's Protecting Taxpayers' Wallets Act, which the Committee considered in late March, and which I believe every single Democratic member opposed. This also complements President Trump's March 27 executive order that even Republicans have admitted is too extreme, which ends collective bargaining across 18 Federal agencies with national security missions, including the State Department and Department of Veterans Affairs, and even the Department of the Treasury and Department of Health and Human Services. This amendment is an attack on official time, which is critical for the efficient management of the Federal workforce and a high priority for unions that represent Federal employees. Official time reduces employee turnover. It improves customer service. It prevents costly litigation and grievances and leads to quicker and more efficient implementation of agency initiatives.

I just want to give one example. So, let us use the post office, United States Postal Service. So, today, we have 200,000 less postal employees than we did 20 years ago. And the reason that is the case is because the union, the postal unions, sat down with the postmaster general and talked about automation. How do we make this process move faster with less people? How do we save the postal customer money, and yet, how do we do it without attrition, without a lot of layoffs involuntary?

So, they worked out an agreement. They brought in high-speed sorting machines, all kinds of new technology into the Postal Service. And over 20 years, we have been able to reduce the number of postal employees by 200,000. That happened by sitting down and working things out on the job and in the workplace. That was done in a way that we reassigned people who used to sort that mail by hand, but it was sitting down and working it out, and that saved the postal customer a huge amount of money. Think about it, 200,000 less people doing that job, and it is because we have the ability for the unions representing the employees, collectively representing their interests, making sure they get treated with respect, and that we did not have mass layoffs when we went to technology, we brought in high-speed equipment and automation. We worked it out.

I am a former union president. Your mission as a union representative is to help the business, make it more efficient, make sure those jobs are protected, make sure the company is successful, and that is the job of the postal unions. I remember September 11—right after September 11, a bunch of post offices, they had threats from anthrax. We had, right here at the Brentwood postal facility here that serves Washington, D.C., we had somebody, some terrorists, mailing anthrax to officers here on Capitol Hill. We shut down Longworth. I got elected on September 11, so I remember this vividly. We had two postal workers, Joseph Curseen and Mr. Morris, both of them died. Those are postal workers that worked at Brentwood died from anthrax inhalation because they were sorting mail. Now, if it was a private company, those employees would have walked, right? They would have walked. I am not going to

throw mail. Are you kidding me? And bring that anthrax home to my family, my kids?

The unions, the postal unions met with their members, and they said we have just been attacked, a terrorist attack. We have to keep the mail going. So, because they took that oath and they served this country, they kept working. I had two sisters with small kids at the time. They went to work. They went to work with their union support, and that is what we are punishing today, that type of loyalty to our country. That is what you are punishing today. We should not be doing that. Mr. Chairman, I yield back. Thank you for your courtesy.

Chairman COMER. I will recognize myself. I want to thank Mr. Perry for his amendment. He and I have been working together for this policy goal, and I look forward to pursuing this legislation through regular order. However, for the purposes of this Committee's reconciliation efforts, I must unfortunately oppose this amendment from my good friend. Do any other Members seek recognition? Ms. Pressley—I am sorry—Ms. Crockett. Ms. Crockett.

Ms. CROCKETT. All right. Just briefly, I want to reiterate the words of my colleague, and it looks like this may go down since you are opposing it, so I will not belabor the point. I will say that as you do go forward, Mr. Perry, because I know that this is something that will most likely come back, I would ask, I know that in the second-to-last paragraph, there is this definition of "union time." And it lays out the term, "union time," means the time an employee of an agency who is a labor representative for a labor organization spends performing non-agency business while on duty. I would ask for further clarification of what non-agency business would mean because while you may not believe or I may not believe, we may define what non-agency business looks like completely differently.

And the reason that I say that, is that you were talking about people campaigning, and the reality is that right now, you see those of us on our side of the aisle, we are not trying to do things like union busting. We are trying to make sure that those workers have those protections. And so as far as I am concerned, campaigning or trying to elect someone who aligns with making sure that you have those protections, so that someone like my constituent, who passed away because he overheated after serving our country for 40 years as a postal worker.

I then had the union come in and telling me about issues as it relates to work, for sure, but they absolutely felt comfortable coming and telling me and supporting my candidacy because they know that when I come to work, I am going to support them. And to be perfectly honest, any candidate that is trying to break up their ability to bargain for contracts, to break up their ability to actually do things such as make sure that they have worker protections, to make sure that they are not going to be at-will, to make sure that they have the ability to unionize, I would say that that is actually absolutely on par with doing the business of that organization because that is going to be a better way to make sure that people will actually want to work for the post office.

I can tell you—I do not know anything about your district, but I can tell you that in my district, we have consistently had a prob-

lem with getting people who actually wanted to work for the post office. And frankly, when we are having conversations like this, when the United States is leading the way in firings, in the entire country, it is the Federal Government that has fired more people than anybody else. I frankly do not know who is going to come and sign up and want to do this work, especially to do it at-will, especially to do it in a way that says even if you are going out and making sure that you are going to get somebody who is going to serve in a seat that is going to make sure that you can be protected. I am going to say that that is non-agency business. As far as I am concerned, that is agency business.

So, as you go forward, I have a feeling of what I believe your intent is, but I think that you are going to need to better define that because you may run into this area of it is up to who is interpreting it. And when I interpret it, I absolutely believe anybody that is going to protect them as a union, that is absolutely agency business. With that, I will yield.

Chairman COMER. Does any other Member seek recognition on the Perry amendment?

Mr. MFUME. Yes, Mr. Chairman, if I might be recognized.

Chairman COMER. Yes. The Chair recognizes Mr. Mfume.

Mr. MFUME. And I will be brief. I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your opposition to this amendment. I would urge others to be in opposition. In Baltimore, we have got a simple term for this. It is called union busting and union bashing, and we need to remember that all union contracts are negotiated documents. They are negotiated by the union and the government vis-a-vis the government agency. And so, all the understandings that are a part of that really are legal. It is a binding document. And this has been taking place for years under Democratic and Republican administrations. So, I would urge Members of this Committee to reject this amendment.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Mr. Higgins.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to support my colleague's amendment. I do not know if it is going to clear reconciliation scrub or not, but knowing that my Chairman does support the language and yet, in his role as Chair, has to oppose changes to the underlying bill so that we can move forward with the reconciliation process. I am going to say I support Mr. Perry's intentions here, and I think it is important that it is on the record that conservative Republicans stand behind that legislative language. I am going to support the amendment. I yield.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. Any other discussion on the Perry amendment?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none. The question is now on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Perry.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it. The amendment is not agreed to.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, I request a recorded vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

For what purpose does Mr. Mfume—oh, well, OK. Before that, if it is OK, the Ranking Member has some unanimous consent request.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a few unanimous consent requests on a letter from the AFL–CIO in opposition to this bill; a letter from the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights in opposition to this bill; the Professional Managers Association in opposition to this bill; and the National Federation of Federal Employees in opposition to this bill, as well as the National Treasury Employees Union in opposition to this bill; the American Federation of Government Employees, AFL–CIO; in opposition to this bill; the Federal Managers Association in opposition to this bill; the National Postal Mail Handlers Union in opposition to this bill; the National Rural Letter Carriers Association in opposition to this bill; the International Association of Firefighters, Edso Kelly in opposition to this bill; the Federal and Technical Engineers, AFL–CIO CLC, in opposition to this bill. Thank you.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

For what purpose does Mr. Mfume seek recognition?

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk distribute the amendment to all Members? And now, will the clerk designate the amendment?

The CLERK. Amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, as offered by Mr. Mfume of Maryland.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentleman from Maryland, Mr. Mfume, is recognized for 5 minutes to explain his amendment.

Mr. MFUME. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In our Nation, I think it goes without saying, we have always taken a great deal of pride in the idea that government serves all Americans, not just those aligned with one political party, ideology, or anything else. This amendment upholds those core principles of fairness and privacy in our Federal hiring process. More specifically, it amends Section 9004, to prohibit any questions regarding a prospective applicant's political party membership or activity—prohibits all such questions.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle have been rather focused on the concept of meritocracy, so I want to point out the fact that no one should have any trouble supporting this amendment that seeks to ensure that employment in public service is based on merit and skills, not political affiliation. Allowing an applicant's political party affiliation to be a deciding factor for a job opportunity really opens the door to implicit bias, discrimination, and the erosion of the public trust that we have always had in our non-partisan civil service. And frankly, I am concerned that it is nothing short, quite frankly, of political coercion. Moreover, leaving politics out of the Federal Government establishes confidence and trust from our constituents. Federal workers, as has been said over and

over and over again, should not have to worry about being punished or fired for expressing their First Amendment right to disagree with this President or any President. I urge my colleagues, upon real consideration of this, to really work now to preserve the integrity of our civil service and to protect the rights of all who wish to serve this Nation by supporting this amendment.

And I would ask unanimous consent, Mr. Chairman, to be entered into the record an *Associated Press* article from January the 13, and it says, "Trump Teams Questions Civil Servants About Who They Voted For."

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. MFUME. I yield back to the Ranking Member should he choose to speak.

Mr. LYNCH. I thank the gentleman. I welcome the opportunity. So, Mr. Mfume, the gentleman from Maryland's amendment here goes right to the heart of the spoils system. So, early in this country's history, back in the 1800s, it was openly accepted that each incoming administration would fire all the people from the earlier administration, you know, Thomas Jefferson did it to John Adams' people, and that carried right through the 1800s until about 1880, and then there was a movement to get away from the spoils system, where whoever the incoming President was, would wipe out all the Federal employees, and then bring in their own partisans.

What drove that was, in the 1880s, President Garfield was operating under the old spoils system, and one of his campaign workers, who had made a couple of small contributions and also handed out some leaflets for him, wanted to be appointed Ambassador to France, and President Garfield would not do it. So, the gentleman shot him, killed him because he had been rejected the job, and he felt because he had supported the President, he was owed that job.

Now, we have come a long way from that until today, and now, President Trump would like to get rid of all the people that have been in government, and he does not care if they were appointed by Republicans or Democrats. He wants to get rid of them all and bring in his own people, you know? So, he wants to go back to the spoils system, and Mr. Mfume's amendment goes right against that and requires that political interrogation not be part of the hiring process. And I think this amendment serves the American people, serves our government so that we will not be firing all the Federal employees every 4 years, especially when a new President comes in. We will not be doing that. That is not good. If you have Federal researchers and nurses, people in different agencies, you do not want a new employee coming in every 4 years. And that is what will happen if we do not accept Mr. Mfume's amendment. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. I will recognize myself.

This amendment introduces policy changes into an otherwise budget related matter, and honestly, it should receive no further consideration. For the purposes of this Committee's reconciliation efforts, I oppose the Mfume amendment.

Do any other Members seek recognition? Ms. Crockett.

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Chair, I just want to point out that we did have the first amendment, that was brought forward by the Rank-

ing Member, that was seeking to actually delete a portion of what has been proposed, which is Section 9004, which is introducing a policy change to change the status of employees from their current status and make them all at-will. So, we should consider policy changes if that is what we are going to do. I want to say that if any of you stood against Project 2025, which so many of you said that you did not know anything about Project 2025, you all were not introducing Project 2025, and acted as if it was this mythical boogeyman that the Democrats were making up, this is straight out of the playbook of Schedule F. This is a Schedule F issue in which we are trying to make sure that there are only loyalists within the Federal Government.

And let me tell you why it is problematic. It is anti-American, it is anti-democratic to decide that you are going to do things like this because what happens is systems start to fail. Not only do they fail us as the American people, because now, we are losing skill sets, we are losing experience, we are losing all those things in the name of somebody saying the only qualification that I probably need to have is to say that I love red hats. At the end of the day, if we really care about this country, the only way that we are going to survive is if there is actually a robust debate every once in a while when one needs to take place because right now, one of the reasons that some of you all do not want to show up and attend a town hall is because there has been no resistance. Because right now, it is only about people who will say I will do what my leader says, and that is not what America is.

So, why would we do this to our Federal workforce if they are doing their jobs, if they are going through reviews, which we do have a review process, and if there are no issues in their reviews, as we saw as it has come out case after case, as you all have sought to fire people, and they lied in the firings, the half of them, and told them they had performance issues when it was clear that they had just had performance evaluations and the performances were fine? And listen, I do not even know why we would make this a partisan issue because I can guarantee you that my fight right now is going to save some Republican jobs as well as Democrat jobs. In fact, if you have seen any of this stuff on social media, there have been testimonies about people that never thought that their fearless leader that they were voting for would actually come for their job, and he did.

So, if you really do not want to be in a situation where, say, you have got the opposite of Donald Trump and a far-left Democrat who says, you know what? I am going to be the anti-Trump. I am going to do exactly the opposite of everything that he did. I am going to hurt those that supported his candidacy the way that he did that to us. If you do not want to run the risk of that, then I would say that this is just a smart amendment. This is not a Democratic amendment. It is not a Republican amendment. It is a smart amendment, and I do not believe that if it is OK for that first section that we dealt with to be in this which would be an absolute policy change, then I think that we can deal with this policy change as well. And I will yield.

Chairman COMER. Any other Members seek recognition? Mr. Subramanyam.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I also want to speak in favor of this amendment. We are trying to keep politics out of certain parts of the Federal workforce and for the reasons people have said this is important. But I also want to add, I represent many of the Federal workers who are losing their jobs, and many of them feel like they are losing their jobs because their work or they, themselves, have been targeted for their political beliefs. But really, what is happening is we are deciding to choose loyalty over competence. And when you do that, you end up with really poor results because in the end, in the theater of war, it does not matter who is fighting with you. It does not matter if you are a Democrat or Republican. They just want to do what is best for our country. When you are studying cancer research and trying to cure cancer, it does not matter if the cancer patient is a Democrat or Republican. What really matters is that we have the very best and brightest in our Federal workforce.

But instead, what is happening with these loyalty tests and with these questions about people's political leanings is we are ending up having a brain drain in our Federal Government, and that is hurting our country. It does not just hurt the Federal workforce. It does not just hurt my district, although it does. It hurts every single American across this country who is served by the Federal workforce. And we are losing the best and brightest now because of this. This amendment, all it says, is that we want to take politics out of the Federal workforce. We want to keep politics out of the Federal workforce. And we do not want loyalty tests when we are trying to hire the best and brightest.

And so, I look at another sector, technology. I have had many hearings recently on wanting to have the best technology for our national security apparatus and within our Federal Government to serve the people. We are losing technologists because they feel like they are being asked whether or not they are a good Democrat or a good Republican, and they are being told that it is not about their skills, it is about their loyalty to this President and loyalty to his party, and so that is going to hurt every single American. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. Do any other Members seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none. The question is now on the Mfume No. 1 amendment.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it and the amendment is not agreed to.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Chairman, I would request a recorded vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

For what purpose does Mr. Mfume again seek recognition.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please distribute the amendment?

[Pause.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will now designate the amendment.

The CLERK. Amendment Number Two to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, as offered by Mr. Mfume of Maryland.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentleman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes to explain his amendment.

Mr. MFUME. Thank you again, Mr. Chairman. This amendment, in short order, would amend Section 90006 of the legislation by prohibiting the facilitation of action of purging Federal employees from the workforce upon their political affiliation, particularly when they apply for Federal employee health benefits. Those benefits have been embedded in the way we do business and what we guarantee our civil workforce and ought to be protected.

Health benefits are not a privilege that is tied to political alignment. They are a fundamental part of the employment package offered, as I said, to Federal employees who serve this Nation regardless of their personal or political beliefs. They are not just in one section of the country. They are in every state and indeed in everybody's congressional district. So, this ought to be just a commonsense approach, and many Federal workers rely on the Federal employee health benefit program to receive their healthcare for themselves, obviously, but also their eligible family members. This benefit cannot nor should it be weaponized as a mechanism to identify, to punish, to exclude because of a political party that one may or may not belong to.

Not only that, it is really none of our business, quite frankly, what party someone belongs to, if they are a Federal worker. Doing that undermines the core values of our democracy and obviously it starts to weaken and eventually destroy civil service as we know it. Elon Musk and his DOGE employees have already fired over 200,000 employees and forced more than 75,000 more to take deferred determination agreements that would pay them throughout the Fiscal Year as they began to leave the jobs, that in my opinion, they were forced to quit. Gutting Federal agencies is not saving the government money, it is not improving efficiency.

In fact, in just the first 100 days of the current Administration, we have seen more money spent on firing people than saving money, not to mention the money spent to rehire the people who were not supposed to be fired in the first place. So, this sort of continued attack on Federal employees primarily harms the middle class of our country. It hurts people in all communities. In the state of Maryland, we have got 144,000 such employees that have gone about serving this country with distinction for many, many years. In my own district, that number is 19,000. Federal workers are the heart blood of the Nation. If you just check with any of them in your own districts, you do not have to listen to me or believe what I am saying is accurate. And so, these mass firings are both un-American and illegal.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment, not just for the Federal workers that it will protect and their healthcare, but also

the democratic principles that it seeks to uphold. With that, Mr. Chair, I would yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. I will recognize myself.

This amendment introduces policy changes into an otherwise budget related matter, and should receive no further consideration. Furthermore, this amendment does not contain a CBO score, as required by reconciliation, so we do not know its impact on the Committee's net savings budgetary instructions. For these reasons and the purposes of this Committee's reconciliation efforts, I must oppose the Mfume amendment No. 2.

Do any other members seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none. The question is now on the Mfume Amendment Number 2.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it. The amendment is not agreed to.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Chairman, I would request a recorded vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

All right. We are going to suspend for 1 second.

[Pause.]

Chairman COMER. OK. We will resume. For what purpose does Mr. Lynch seek recognition?

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Chairman, I believe I have an amendment at the desk.

Chairman COMER. The clerk will distribute the amendment to all Members. The clerk will designate the amendment.

The CLERK. Amendment Number 2 to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, as offered by Mr. Lynch of Massachusetts.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentleman from Massachusetts is recognized for 5 minutes to explain his amendment.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This amendment would ensure that retirement benefits for Federal employees who are also military veterans are not reduced by the new retirement calculations mandated by this bill. So currently, the retirement benefits of Federal workers under the Federal Employees Retirement System and the previous Civil Service Retirement System are calculated based on the average of the highest 3 consecutive years of salary during their Federal careers. The underlying bill would change that and alter this longstanding formula to instead base retirement benefits on an average of the highest 5 consecutive years of base Federal pay. So, this new formula will reduce a Federal worker's retirement benefits by thousands of dollars each year.

And while I strongly support the amendment that will be offered by my colleague, Mr. Min, to strike the high-five formula overall

in the bill, in its entirety, I am offering this additional amendment because I believe that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle can at least agree that we should not reduce the retirement benefits of military veterans who have transitioned to the Federal civilian employment.

The Federal Government is the largest single employer of our veterans. In fact, our Federal workforce of more than 2.4 million employees is made up of 30 percent, or more than 650,000 veterans. That is who the Federal workforce is, 650,000 veterans who served this country, put on the uniform of this country courageously. That is why the nonpartisan Partnership for Public Service reports that veterans are uniquely impacted and have been exposed to significant risk by the Trump Administration's effort to arbitrarily downsize the Federal Government.

In only 100 days since he took office, President Trump, at the direction of Elon Musk, has already conducted mass layoffs across the Federal Government that have included at least 6,000 military veterans. The Trump Administration has also targeted our broader veterans community by firing at least 2,400 VA employees amid a severe staffing shortage of 3,000 healthcare positions at the VA facilities, as I mentioned earlier, and a backlog of more than 250,000 veterans benefit claims. President Trump even fired workers at the veteran suicide crisis hotline during an epidemic of veteran suicide. He is also proceeding with plans to indiscriminately cut an additional 80,000 jobs at the VA at a time when the agency is seeing a 40 percent increase in veteran's health care enrollment and a 30-percent spike in veteran toxic exposure claims since the enactment of our bipartisan, Republicans and Democrats, PACT Act in 2022.

We do not need to make matters worse by reducing the retirement benefits of military veterans who proudly chose to extend their public service by working in the Federal Government. Let us remember that Federal statutes such as the Veterans' Preference Act of 1944, reflect our enduring bipartisan respect for the placement, protection, and retention of veterans in the Federal workforce.

I urge my colleagues to remember—look, I point back to the Brockton VA facility in my district in Brockton, Massachusetts. When I go through there, so many of the nurses and attendants there are veterans. It is uncanny how many of them have served our country in the military, and there is a great vibe there. They love caring for their fellow wounded veterans. I think there is a holistic and actually a medical benefit by having veterans cared for at a VA hospital instead of in a regular hospital, because there is that camaraderie and support and love that is there, and I think it helps them heal.

So, what this bill would do is, especially with my nurses, a lot of those nurses at the VA are veterans, so there is already competition at the VA for nurses, right? So, I got a bunch of private hospitals that are trying to hire the nurses away from the VA and offer them more money. So, what you are doing here today by cutting their retirement benefits, cutting their worker rights, cutting their pay, is just going to make it easier for those private hospitals to steal away our best nurses. We should not be doing this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. I recognize myself for a brief statement. I want to thank Mr. Lynch for this amendment, recognizing the tremendous work and value veterans provide and their continued service to our country and the Federal workforce. I cannot support this amendment, which does not contain a score from the Congressional Budget Office to determine its budgetary impact on our Committee's instruction to save \$50 billion as required in this budget reconciliation process.

Do any other Members seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none. The question is now on the Lynch amendment No. 2.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it. And the amendment is not agreed to.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Chairman, I ask for a recorded vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

For what purpose does Ms. Stansbury seek recognition?

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

Chairman COMER. The clerk will please distribute. The clerk will please designate the amendment.

The CLERK. Amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, as offered by Ms. Stansbury of New Mexico.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentlelady from New Mexico is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. STANSBURY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am offering an amendment this morning here to address the major concern that the vast majority of Americans, and especially the constituents in my district, have shared with me, which is the unfettered attacks that we have seen over the last hundred days on vital programs that support our communities, whether that is Social Security, Medicaid, food and housing assistance programs, or just the vital programs that people depend on every day. We were just talking about veterans benefits.

And in fact, Mr. Chairman, I am just coming off of a town hall tour across my district. We did 15 town halls across 10 counties in rural and urban New Mexico. We heard from over 15,000 New Mexicans and the most important issues that we heard in every single town hall, and these were not just people of the same party, these were just New Mexicans across the board, from all different ideological backgrounds, all different communities, was that they are afraid right now of what they are seeing with the Federal Government and cutbacks to Social Security programs, the proposals that are in this reconciliation package that would impact Medicaid, the proposals that are in front of this Committee that would cut

back the Federal workforce that provides Social Security benefits and VA benefits, cuts to housing and food assistance programs, and the general lawlessness that we have seen across the board in the way in which this Administration has been carrying out these cuts and have been enabled by the GOP here now, especially with this reconciliation package.

So, I want to read my amendment. It is very straightforward. It says, "The President or any member of the President's cabinet or any officer or employee of a Federal Agency may not take any action, including an action related to staffing, office realignments, budgetary data, or operational changes that would impact the delivery or timing of vital services that Americans depend on, including Social Security, Medicaid, food assistance, housing income supports, or other programs; or two, to attempt to privatize these services or programs." It is a very straightforward amendment. I would hope that my friends across the aisle—of course, I doubt they will—would support this amendment. I hear our friends going to me daily and say that they have no intent to cut Medicaid, even though their instructions for this reconciliation package say that they are instructing the committee of jurisdiction to cut funding by \$880 billion.

We know that this would impact almost a quarter million New Mexicans and the health care system of our entire state. We know that millions of Americans will lose access to health care if these Medicaid benefits get cut. We know that over 150,000 New Mexicans, especially our elders, our seniors, and our low-income families, would lose access to food assistance, whether that is SNAP assistance to buy groceries or whether that is school lunches, if these cuts go through. And we know that this will also impact our communities across the board in just the basic programs and services, whether it is the VA, Social Security, or any of these programs. So, this amendment says that the Administration has got to stop doing that because it is hurting the American people. And with that, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. I now recognize myself. This amendment introduces policy changes into an otherwise budget related matter and should receive no further consideration. Furthermore, this amendment does not contain a CBO score, as required by reconciliation, so we do not know its impact on the Committee's net savings budgetary instructions. For these reasons and the purposes of this Committee's reconciliation efforts, I oppose the amendment.

Does any other Member seek recognition? Ms. Crockett.

Ms. CROCKETT. Thank you so much, Mr. Chair. It is interesting to hear you kind of use the form language of, "we do not understand the impact." The idea that Ms. Stansbury proposed an amendment that specifically talks about vital programs, literally not extracurriculars, but literally what people depend upon to actually survive and live. And the idea that are a retort to whether or not someone will be able to eat, to whether or not someone will have a roof over their head, to whether or not they will have the healthcare that they deserve, our answer is, well, we do not know what the cost is going to be.

Well, I can tell you that for those people that may end up losing their lives, there is no cost that you can tell them that will make

them feel better or make this feel like a more American bill because they would have lost their life, or they would have lost their home, or they would have lost their healthcare. So, I would ask that at least we engage in the conversation so that even if we are not moving forward on this in the moment, we evidence to all of our constituents that we actually care and believe in these vital government programs. I will yield.

Mr. LYNCH. Will the gentlelady yield to me?

Ms. CROCKETT. Yes, I will yield to the Ranking Member.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you. Just in furtherance, I fully support the comments just made by the gentlelady from Texas, and I also want to point out that Ms. Stansbury's amendment is one of preservation. So, she is acting courageously to defend the benefits that she describes in her amendment, which would be the delivery and timing of services including Social Security, Medicaid, food, housing, income supports, and other existing Federal programs. So, she is defending the current level of benefits. That is known. That is not something that CBO needs to do a study on. It is what we are spending today. So, the objection that we do not know the cost or the impact is not true. We know exactly to the penny what the cost of those benefits are to Social Security, to Medicaid, to food assistance and housing. Those are known quantities. And so, I disagree with the assessment that part of a reason for denying the propriety of this amendment is because there are unknown questions on the budgetary side, and I would yield to the gentleman, Mr. Frost.

Mr. FROST. Thank you, and I yield to Ms. Stansbury.

Ms. STANSBURY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Now, I want to make clear and build on what Mr. Lynch is saying here. First of all, this is just preserving the existing programs that Americans are already depending on, and are speaking loud and clear. In fact, the polling shows this week that two-thirds of Americans are completely opposed to the cuts that DOGE and Elon Musk have put on these programs. And I hear people in this chamber every single day trying to claim that they are not impacting real Americans, that these are just paid protesters. Well, let me tell you, I was in community after community in my district over the last couple of weeks, and I had people show up crying, people saying that their cancer treatments could be terminated if Medicaid goes away, people who say they will lose everything, they will not be able to put a roof over their head or food on the table if these cuts go through, people who are frightened by what they see is the absolute attack on their civil liberties and free speech and their freedom.

And I actually went to the Social Security office in my district last week and was denied entry and told to call a regional office after I had an appointment and spoke to people who have literally been waiting for days and weeks because Elon Musk has crashed the Social Security system, firing people. Their computer systems are down, our call centers are completely overwhelmed, and people cannot get appointments for months. This is what is happening in America right now, and that is why I introduced this amendment, to protect those programs and to fight for the American people and to fight for the programs that we know they depend on so that they can survive. I yield back.

Ms. GREENE. Mr. Chairman?

Chairman COMER. Ms. Greene.

Ms. GREENE. Hi. I would like to point something out that our Democrat colleagues know this because they did reconciliation before when they were in charge. And it may be hard for some of the freshman Dems to understand, but this is not a policy debate. That is not what reconciliation is. This is a budget process. And so, for the American people watching at home, our Democrat colleagues are sitting here trying to score points and spread more lies and divisiveness about Republicans in order to spread more garbage across the country. But this is about budget, Mr. Chairman, and this Committee is trying to do serious work, and we need to stay focused on budget, and that is for the American people, and it is very serious. That is what we remain focused on here in our work on oversight.

And the Democrats know that provisions must be carefully crafted because they did it before, and it has to be scored by CBO to be included in this budget bill, and that is what we are trying to do, Mr. Chairman. And I just wanted to point that out for the people watching at home, so they are not swayed by this entertainment today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Chairman?

Chairman COMER. Very good. The Chair recognizes Mr. Lynch.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to say our Federal budget reflects our values. When we fund the VA—so it is not just about numbers. It is about the mission and the purpose of our budget.

Chairman COMER. With all due respect, you do understand our Federal budget is \$2.5 trillion and then.

Mr. LYNCH. Reclaiming my time now.

Chairman COMER. I know, but our value—

Mr. LYNCH. Reclaiming my time. You do not get to just interject, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. You know what? I think you have already spoken, so we are out of order, so.

Mr. LYNCH. I have not spoken on this. I borrowed on somebody else's time.

Chairman COMER. All right. All right. Go ahead.

Mr. LYNCH. I borrowed somebody else's time, and I will speak.

Chairman COMER. Well, speak. You all have put our country in debt. Kids are graduating from college—

Mr. LYNCH. You are about to put our country in \$4 trillion more debt.

Chairman COMER. I do not think you all could find a billion dollars in savings.

Mr. LYNCH. Come on. Come on.

Chairman COMER. You do not care about the Congressional Budget Office scores because you do not care. You just want to spend the hardworking American taxpayers' money.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, reclaiming my time. I ask to restore the time.

Chairman COMER. Give him 5 minutes. You can talk all you want. I want everyone in America to see how much opposition you all have to try to get fiscal order.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Chairman, you are out of order. You are out of order. Your own Chairman, and you are out of order.

Chairman COMER. Go ahead. Go ahead. Go ahead.

Mr. LYNCH. OK. Now, without interruption, what we decide here in the budget—the point I am trying to make is it is not just dollars and cents. It is about where that money goes and what purposes and what priorities it reflects. Governing is about making decisions, and we choose to fund things that in this country we have honored for a very long time, and that, I have to say, in my 25 years in Congress, we have had very little disagreement on funding veterans' benefits. I have to say that. I do not think I can count on one hand the time we had disagreements over 25 years when we talk about, how do we care for our veterans, things like that, and I miss that because now we are fighting tooth and nail about whether we are going to lay off 80,000 employees at the VA.

What I am saying is that, sure, it is about the budget, but underlying that budget is our priorities as a country, what we consider to be worthwhile, and I feel that veterans' benefits are worthwhile, veterans' healthcare is worthwhile. The way we treat our Federal employees is important. It is intrinsic to the work of the Federal Government and how we help the most vulnerable, as well as average everyday Americans, on Social Security, on Medicaid. So, I have had layoffs recently in one of my big health centers, community health centers, laid off 60 people in a city that cannot afford that. And that is because of decisions that are being made on the budget, on the numbers, on the budget. We are going to cut over \$800 billion on Medicaid. I have got nursing homes. So, I got seniors who are, they cannot go out and get another job. They are in nursing homes. Their families are trying to care for them. We are cutting 40 percent of the income for those long-term care nursing homes for elderly are being impacted by the numbers in this budget, and that is very troublesome.

So, I am just saying that this is different. Yes, the gentlelady from Georgia is correct. I have been through reconciliation before. I know how this process works, and it is about numbers, and I agree with that point, but this is different. This reconciliation is going after things that have been long respected and honored in this country, and we are changing our ideals and our commitments to people, like our own veterans. They want to pull benefits from Federal employees and, again, the numbers behind this all, the general purpose here, as you know, Mr. Chairman, is to make a tax cut possible.

So, we are going to increase the debt. We are, that is the plan here. We are going to increase the debt by, I think it will be at least \$4 trillion based on what we are looking at right now, and to justify that, we are cutting all this. You know, veterans' benefits are different. They are different. They are different and they are special because veterans' benefits are for courageous service previously rendered. We owe this. We owe those benefits. Those wounded veterans lying in VA hospitals all across this country, your state and mine, we owe them for their service. They have delivered, every one of them, by definition, every veteran who is eligible for this has honorably served this country in uniform, put their

life on the line for the benefit of us all. We made a commitment to them.

We said, if you come back with wounds, visible or invisible, we will take care of you. We made that promise. Multiple generations of Americans have made that promise. This budget, these numbers breach that promise. We break that promise in this bill, first time ever, at least in the 25 years I have been here. Mr. Chairman, thank you for your courtesy, and I yield back.

Chairman COMER. Any other Members seek recognition?

Mr. FROST. Mr. Chair?

Chairman COMER. Mr. Frost.

Mr. FROST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I mean, what we are hearing from the Republicans on this Committee is laughable, and it is hypocrisy. They want to hide. They do not want to support the amendment from the Stansbury, which I support, and they want to hide behind the CBO and process. You did not care what the CBO had to say when you passed the last set of tax cuts for billionaires, the ultra-wealthy and corporations, when the CBO said that it would raise the national debt by trillions. You did not care. You do not care now. You want to hide behind the CBO because you do not want to pass an amendment that protects Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, food, housing, and programs that our constituents support. Then you want to bring up process.

If we want to pass the amendment, we can pass the amendment. Do not hide behind process. If you believe that we need to protect Social Security, then vote yes, but do not come here and tell us that we cannot pass it, like we do not have the power to simply press the button that says "yes" on here. It is hypocrisy. This is Republicans on this Committee trying to cover up for Donald Trump and themselves from the fact that they want to rob our constituents of earned benefits and things we have fought for because they want to give a massive \$7 trillion tax cut that will go to the richest people in this country and put more money in their pockets, and they want us and our constituents to pay for it.

They are finding money by stripping for parts the essential services that middle and working class and the fastest growing class of Americans, the working poor, not just depend on, but have earned, and that we have put forward as part of our social construct, that we will take care of each other and we will see this country through the eyes of the most vulnerable. It is despicable. So, if you are going to be about cutting these things to help your billionaire donors and corrupt corporations, then just say it, but do not hide behind process and the CBO when you have not cared about it before. I will yield my time to the Ranking Member.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Frost. Mr. Casar, did you desire time? Ms. Crockett?

Ms. CROCKETT. Yes, please, because Maxwell took us to church. Push the button, push the button. That is the name of the sermon. Hallelujah. I appreciate that because honestly, you know, the one thing that I hear, and, Maxwell, I appreciate that you have been traveling the country and actually listening to people. I appreciate Melanie talking about getting out listening to people. I have had an opportunity to get out and listen to actual people, and the one thing that I hear is that they are following no rules. That is the

only thing I hear, is that this Administration has not been following any rules and been breaking everything, and so it is weird that we would hide behind process when we are talking about doing good. But to do bad, to fire workers, yes, let us do that, to decide that we are going to try to jerry rig and do this situation around birthright citizenship, to decide that we are going to try to just write out the Civil Rights Act in the form of an executive order. I can go on for days about all the things that really have not been a part of the rules that have only brought about harm.

In fact, I still do not understand how or why Elon Musk was allowed to do anything that he was allowed to do, and honestly, I would argue that he was not allowed to do any of the things that he did, and no one argued for any procedures or rules then. So, I applaud you, Ms. Stansbury, again, and thank you, Reverend Maxwell, for the sermon.

Mr. FROST. If you would yield back?

Ms. CROCKETT. I will yield it back to you, sir.

Mr. FROST. I want to add on because you just brought something up, Representative Crockett, that reminds me that our colleagues are also saying that we cannot vote on this because it does not have a CBO score and because the CBO has not told us the impacts of it. And as a representative in the U.S. Congress, if you need a CBO score to know the impact of Social Security in your district, if you need a CBO score to know the impact of Medicaid in your district, food in your district, housing in your district, Medicaid in your district, then you need to go back out and speak to the people in your district. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. Any other Members seek recognition?

Mr. FROST. I yield to Representative Crockett.

Ms. CROCKETT. I just want to be clear. If anybody actually wants to know the impacts, we have it. Specifically, in Georgia 14 as it relates to what is going to happen to Medicaid in Georgia 14, 111,000 children under the age of 19 and 20,000 seniors over the age of 65 will be impacted. As it relates to those that are dealing with food assistance, it will impact 99,000 people in that district. Sorry, I was trying to help.

Chairman COMER. Any other Member seek recognition? Mr. Subramanyam?

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to speak in favor of the amendment because all we are trying to do here is say that do not reorganize or cut a department or agency to where you cannot deliver the very services that that department has created to give to the American people. And so, you know, I have heard from folks that work in my district office about how they are getting calls about OPM becoming even slower processing case work. The Social Security Administration is requiring people to come in person now because of policy changes, yet they cut half the people that worked at the Social Security Administration and closed many offices, so people's appointments are getting canceled, right? And I have story after story after story about people who used to call our office and be able to get in touch with an agency or get their agency problem solved, and now they cannot because some of these cuts and some of these firings now make it so that

the very agencies that were developed to provide services to the American people cannot do so anymore.

That is throwing the baby out with the bath water. That is another way of putting it. And all we are trying to say is do not do that. Stop the cuts. If they do not make sense, if their very purpose is to undermine a program, then just say that. If you are trying to cut the Social Security Administration because you do not like Social Security, you want to get rid of it, just say that, right? But do not cut half the workforce who is trying to administer that program. And you know this stuff about, you know, cutting the debt and the deficit, I mean, this President is the one that increased the debt by trillions. The last time he said that these tax cuts were going to pay down—we are going to start paying down the debt like it is water. That is what he said after the 2017 tax cut. What happened? The deficit and the debt both increased dramatically. We are at \$36 trillion now. Then he said tariffs last time would pay down the debt, and that has not happened either. Next, he is going to say his golf trips paid on the debt. The reality is, this is not about fiscal responsibility. This is about cutting services that help the American people, all so we can give it to the largest and wealthiest corporations. I yield back.

Ms. STANSBURY. Does the gentleman yield?

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. I yield to Ms. Stansbury.

Ms. STANSBURY. Thank you so much for pointing that out. I also think, Mr. Chairman, just being conscious of language, you know, in this room, just a few moments ago, our friends across the aisle used the word “garbage” to refer to our fight to protect your Social Security. I am so sorry, but seniors, veterans, children whose parents have died, kids on school lunches, are not garbage. The American people are asking us to fight for them and the fight for their rights, for the funding that keeps them alive. The fight to help the people of this country is not garbage.

I think that, you know, we are sitting here and the debate has taken this bizarre turn where it is being put forward that somehow we do not care about fiscal responsibility. I am sorry, that is just baloney, OK? Like, we are all about making the government more efficient. We are all about addressing the needs of the American people. This amendment is about defending the existing programs that keep Americans alive, and neither them or those programs or the Federal workers who provide those programs are garbage. These are the American people. These are who we work for. We do not work for Donald Trump. We do not work for the billionaires. And the entire argument that is being put forward here today, that cutting a few little pieces here and there and decimating the Federal workforce and these programs is somehow going to save the deficit is literally a bold-faced lie.

The CBO has scored your reconciliation bill. The CBO says it is going to raise the debt by \$5 trillion. So, if you are going to sit here and say it is not going to raise the debt, you are just lying. That is factually untrue. So, if you want to play the CBO score game, let us talk about what this bill actually does. It is going to raise the debt by \$5 trillion, it is going to increase deficit spending by \$37 trillion over the next 30 years, and it is going to give your billionaire donors and all those guys out there that you are trying to

help, including these guys serving in the Cabinet, the largest tax break in American history. And how are you going to do it? By balancing the books on Federal workers and the elders and seniors and children of this country, and that is why we are fighting. And it is not garbage, and the fight is not garbage, and we are here to defend the people who we work for, not the billionaires. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. Does any other Member seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the question is now on the Stansbury amendment. The question is now on the Stansbury amendment.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those oppose signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it. The amendment is not agreed to.

Mr. LYNCH. Recorded vote requested.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

For what purpose does Ms. Stansbury seek recognition again?

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Chairman, I have one more amendment.

Chairman COMER. The clerk will distribute the amendment to all Members.

[Pause.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will designate the amendment.

The CLERK. Amendment Number 2 to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, as offered by Ms. Stansbury of New Mexico.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentlewoman from New Mexico is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. STANSBURY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, I am grateful for the notes that were brought to this debate a few moments ago by my colleagues on this side of the aisle about following the rules because there has been nothing about this Administration over the last hundred days that has been about following the rules. In fact, we have never seen a more lawless administration basically trying to break the rules around the appropriations process, around the constitutional separation of powers, around Federal hiring and firing laws, about data mining your data. And in fact, there are now over 170 Federal court cases and over 90 restraining orders and injunctions against this Administration for their lawless behavior. So, what this amendment does, it is to make sure that the American taxpayers are not left on the hook and that those who are breaking these laws cannot continue to do so or to financially benefit from the Federal Government.

So, I am going to read it: "Any individual serving in an advisory or decision-making role to the President or the President's administration, including any special government employee"—that would

be someone like Mr. Musk or any of these DOGE employees—"as that term is defined in Section 202, Title 18 of the Code, who has significant financial conflicts of interest or who has been found by a Federal court to have violated any Federal law while serving in that role, shall be barred from serving, advising, or interacting with the executive branch and from entering into a contract with any Federal Agency and shall be held liable for any damages to the Federal Government and the American people."

Now, I know that this is all about the budget, so you want to save the American people money. Now, let us take a quick diversion to clarify one thing. First of all, the whole premise of this DOGE exercise was that it was going to save the American people money. But actually, the report card is out this week, and, actually, the Trump Administration has spent tens of billions of dollars more money in the last hundred days than the last Administration did. They did not save you money, guys. They actually spent more money, and part of the reason is because Donald Trump is using Federal taxpayer dollars to fly down to his golf resort every weekend while he is taking away your benefits and Elon Musk is destroying the fundamental programs that provide VA benefits and Social Security and actually help with programs that you all depend on, and they are not saving money.

This whole idea that it is waste, fraud, and abuse, it is a total lie, because while they are doing this, they are also giving themselves additional contracts. We know that Elon Musk has already put himself in a position before he leaves in the next couple of weeks to pick up contracts at FAA. He is going to pick up contracts at DOD. I heard yesterday from some of my constituents that he is actually talking about getting billions of dollars through this Golden Dome project that they want to put in this reconciliation package. I mean, talk about graft. We are talking tens of billions of dollars to build a missile defense system that Donald Trump just brought up 1 day and he wants to give a private contract to Elon Musk to build it.

So, this amendment would protect the American taxpayers from people like these special government employees who have been exploiting their role within the Federal Government, self-dealing, stealing from the American people, impacting our services, and frankly, putting you on the hook for their defense in the courts. So, that is what this amendment is all about, and with that, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. Does any other Member seek recognition? Ms. Crockett?

Ms. CROCKETT. Yes. I just wanted to thank the gentlelady for her amendment, and I was curious because you already kind of preempted the arguments that would come from the other side as it relates to saving money. We do know that Elon had a contract that he was planning on entering into as it relates to Tesla vehicles. Do we not?

Ms. STANSBURY. Yes.

Ms. CROCKETT. And last time I checked, that contract was somewhere around \$400 million.

Ms. STANSBURY. As I understand it, yes, with Department of Defense.

Ms. CROCKETT. OK. And to be perfectly honest, I think that you were being kind of kind in this amendment because they are only prevented or precluded from service within the executive branch, but we still have other branches of government where they can still do stuff, huh?

Ms. STANSBURY. Yes.

Ms. CROCKETT. So, you actually left a lot of leeway for someone to even do more, so even if Elon wanted to go somewhere else, he could. It just could not be here. In addition to that, there is this thing about liability, and this really excited me as a practitioner because I think people were wondering, why is it that Elon is not being sued? Because Elon is committing so many heinous issues as it relates to violating. And we still do not know, and I do not know when we will know, because it seems like we are not doing oversight over that right now to better understand how much damage he has done as it relates to our privacy and our information. But it has this liability portion in here, so somebody like him, who just happens to be the richest person in the world, would actually be able to be liable in a personal sense, correct?

Ms. STANSBURY. Yes, absolutely.

Ms. CROCKETT. Instead of, say, him being able to hide behind the shields that normally protect you because you are doing something "on behalf of the government."

Ms. STANSBURY. Yes.

Ms. CROCKETT. I mean, this Committee is supposed to be about waste, fraud, and abuse. So, if there is any abuse or fraud, this would absolutely preclude that or any abuses that are taking place with people that are, say, self-dealing and coming in, wrecking everything, and then stealing all our money, right?

Ms. STANSBURY. Absolutely right.

Ms. CROCKETT. I think it is an amazing amendment, and I support it.

Chairman COMER. Do any other Members seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the question is now on the Stansbury Amendment Number 2.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it. The amendment is not agreed to.

Ms. CROCKETT. And Mr. Chair, I would ask for a recorded vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

For what purposes does Mr. Frost seek recognition?

Mr. FROST. I have an amendment at the desk.

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please distribute the amendment?

[Pause.]

Chairman COMER. Now will the clerk designate the amendment?

The CLERK. Amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Com-

mittee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, as offered by Mr. Frost of Florida.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes to explain his amendment.

Mr. FROST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The rule of law is fundamental in a functioning country and the only thing that is going to guarantee people's safety and security. Without the rule of law, there is chaos, corruption, anarchy. And if the President and the government he leads do not follow all laws and ignore the ones that they find inconvenient, then no laws really matter for the general public. So, no bills that we file, debate, or vote on matter as long as the President of United States is defying Supreme Court decisions and defying the law.

The Trump Administration is already undermining the rule of law, spewing out blatantly illegal executive orders, ignoring Americans' constitutional rights, and ignoring and even mocking many of the Federal judges and judicial decisions that point out and prohibit Trump's illegal actions. Our democracy and our rights are still hanging on by a thread because Trump has lost over and over again in court, his illegal acts prohibited by Federal judges appointed by both Democrats and Republicans, and now the Administration is even ignoring a unanimous nine to zero Supreme Court decision. This is a Supreme Court decision that includes six Republicans, three of them appointed by Trump himself. Our Federal judges have been stunned by this but slow to figure out on how to react. Congress must act on this.

So far, congressional Republicans have allowed Trump to get away with everything, rolling over and completely surrendering all their power to the Trump Administration. Congress has to exercise its authority and defend the rule of law. My amendment will help us do that. If the White House or any executive agency of this Administration or any administration violates an order by the Supreme Court, my amendment will nullify this entire legislation. This amendment is important because the 9 to zero Supreme Court decision, that the Trump Administration is currently ignoring, is in defense of our most fundamental right, the right to due process twice in our Constitution. In both the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments, it states that the government cannot deprive us of our life, liberty, or property without due process. It does not apply to certain people in this country. It applies to every human in this country.

Because of that constitutional, fundamental due process right, the Supreme Court's 9 to zero ruling was an order to the Trump Administration to facilitate the return to the United States a Maryland man, Kilmar Abrego Garcia. Kilmar is the man who the Trump Administration sent to a hellish prison in El Salvador by mistake, the Administration even said by mistake, an administrative error they keep calling it. The Administration also had to admit that Kilmar had no criminal history, but they still casually called him a terrorist, pretending that he has gang tattoos and hope that people will believe them. But here is the thing: that is horrible, but the worst part of this whole thing right now is the

reasoning that they are using to not facilitate his return, which the Supreme Court has ordered the Administration to do, and they are saying that it is completely out of their hands. With that reasoning, what is to prevent this Administration from deporting anyone in this country, citizens included? And then when ordered to facilitate the return of the citizen or the person, they can simply chalk it up to it is out of our hands. We have to talk about this and handle it now.

My colleagues always want to talk about American exceptionalism without protecting the thing that makes this country exceptional, which is the right of due process, not just for citizens, but for all people on our soil and on our land. That is what makes us exceptional. This is just a tool to label anyone Trump wants as a criminal, strip them of their rights. Trump has said he wants to do it to citizens, too. He said it in the Oval Office that people he considers his enemies who are home grown.

If Trump can do this to one person, he can do it to anyone. The government can take you, disappear you to a foreign prison, tweet emojis to mock your family's confusion, terror, and helplessness, or post your wife's address and send her into hiding like the Trump Administration did to Kilmar's wife. This is a red line. This is when Congress needs to step up and step in. And so, I ask my fellow Members of the Committee to support my amendment. Thank you, and I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. I will recognize myself. This amendment would have the effect of potentially repealing the effects of Section 90006, the bipartisan Federal employee's health benefit government-wide improper payments audit requirement at any time over 10-year budget window. We are working within the budget reconciliation process. We, therefore, have no idea how Congressional Budget Office would score the effects of this amendment, which would very likely affect our current savings and put our Committee Print under \$50 billion net savings instruction. I, therefore, strongly oppose this amendment. Does any other Members seek—

Mr. FROST. Would you yield to me, Mr. Chair? I have a question for you.

Chairman COMER. You have already been recognized, so no.

Mr. FROST. All right. I am talking about your time.

Chairman COMER. I yielded back.

Mr. FROST. OK.

Chairman COMER. Do any Members seek recognition? Ms. Crockett?

Ms. CROCKETT. You can go to Casar first or, OK, I can go. I will yield my time to Mr. Frost.

Mr. FROST. No, I think something is very interesting, because in the Chairman's explanation of why he does not support the amendment, he said there is a possibility that the amendment would nullify a bipartisan piece of the legislation in front of us. But all my amendment does is say that if the President of the United States defies a Supreme Court decision, then it nullifies the bill, which means the Chairman is conceding right here in this Committee that the President of United States could, and I would say is right now, defying a Supreme Court decision, which is dangerous in this

country. You should not have to worry about anything being nullified if you truly believe that the Administration is following the law, but not even the Chairman believes that the Administration is following the law. I will yield back to Representative Crockett.

Ms. CROCKETT. Yes. Do you mind answering a few questions for me?

Mr. FROST. Yes.

Ms. CROCKETT. Out of curiosity, you talk about them violating this law, and I am curious if most Americans understand what you and I understand is that in violating someone's civil rights, constitutional rights, we are actually costing this country a lot of money because whenever we get Abrego back, baby, they going to get sued.

Mr. FROST. Oh, a hundred percent.

Ms. CROCKETT. So, literally, your amendment would actually save us money in the form of, listen, you either get these savings that are already written in that are going to harm people to the tune of cutting down \$1.8 billion in direct spending and \$4.3 billion in discretionary spending over 10 years. But when we look at it, though, if we can hopefully hold a rogue administration in check that will limit how much money we may be on the hook for going forward, if you have an administration that continues to violate people's civil rights, their constitutional rights, and even now, so many of our worker's rights are being violated, and that is risking so much of our Treasury. Because when somebody gets a lawyer that decides that they will not bend the knee to this Administration and instead will stand up and do what is right based on what is in the Constitution, that is going to cost us money in the long run anyway, isn't it?

Mr. FROST. No, a hundred percent, and it is that, and it is also the fact that this Administration is paying foreign governments to imprison these people. And so, you know, I remember here on the campaign trail, the President ranting about sending money overseas, sending money to other places. It looks like he has a problem with us expending resources to ensure that we stop the spread of preventable diseases so it does not reach America, but he does not have a problem with us sending money to imprison people whose constitutional rights have been violated.

Ms. CROCKETT. No, you are absolutely right, and honestly, we also need to make sure that we are conducting effective oversight over that because as we spend money, whether it is with a prison that we have right here on our soil, whether it is a prison that we contract with, we still are the ones that have to oversee and make sure that people's rights are not being violated. And frankly, I want to say thank you to those of you that spent your own money and went to check up because it does not seem like we are getting any reports. In fact, there were a lot of people, as we saw Senator Van Hollen, who also went over. There are a lot of people that did not even know if Abrego was alive. And it is my understanding that when you all went over, they did not even want to let you all in, so I do not know how it is that we send money.

And you know, like I know, that as it relates to the money that we were sent into foreign countries for USAID, we would often-times take congressional delegation trips to see what is going on.

How are you spending this money? Is this an effective use of our resources? But it seems like we do not want to conduct any oversight over what they are doing with these folks that have had their due process rights violated. Thank you so much for this amendment. I really do appreciate it, and I will yield.

Chairman COMER. Do any other Members seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the question is now on the amendment offered by Mr. Frost.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Chair, I ask for a recorded vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

For what purpose does Mr. Casar seek recognition?

Mr. CASAR. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk, Amendment Number 3.

Chairman COMER. The clerk will please distribute the Casar Amendment Number 3.

[Pause.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will now report.

The CLERK. Amendment Number 3 to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, offered by Mr. Casar of Texas.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. Mr. Casar is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CASAR. Mr. Chairman, Trump lied when he said he was going to support the American worker. In his first hundred days in office, Trump has raised prices for families across America. He has done devastating damage to the economy, and he has stripped collective bargaining rights away for over 1 million American workers working here in the Federal Government. And in Congress, we can fix this right now, Republicans and Democrats alike. Because these workers, they are not political pawns in somebody's game, they are all of our constituents. And I know of no other time in American history where a President has taken away workers' rights from this many people just in one single day. It is unprecedented. It is unacceptable. The courts are not accepting it, and the Congress should not accept it.

If we want the services our constituents rely on to be delivered effectively, we need to restore these collective bargaining rights right now. And in this bill, we are talking about stripping away the pensions of so many Federal workers, while at the same time letting stand Trump's illegal order that takes away the bargaining rights of those very same workers. So, if we allow this blow to labor rights to go unchallenged, Trump is going to be coming after private sector workers' collective bargaining rights next. So, I encourage my colleagues to support my amendment and support the right

of all workers to collectively bargain rather than pass this bill, which strips away workers' pensions and will become part of a bigger bill that strips away workers' Medicaid, that strips away workers' education funds, that strips away all this money from the American people and the American worker all to give it out to billionaires and to their corporate cronies. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. I will now recognize myself for a statement. The amendments budgetary effects are not clear. Furthermore, this amendment invokes policy reforms. The Committee's directive under the budget reconciliation process is to achieve net budgetary savings of \$50 billion. That is a foreign concept to some on this Committee, but budget savings of \$50 billion. I, therefore, oppose this amendment. Does any other Member seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. OK. Seeing none. The question is now on the Casar Amendment Number 3.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Chair, we would ask for a recorded vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

For what purpose does Mr. Casar seek recognition?

Mr. CASAR. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk, Amendment Number 2.

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please distribute?

[Pause.]

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please report?

The CLERK. Amendment Number 2 to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print provided for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, offered by Mr. Casar of Texas.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes to explain the amendment.

Mr. CASAR. Mr. Chairman, we are now talking about ways we can save the American taxpayer money, and here is an idea. Why don't we say Elon Musk has to follow the law and leave the government at the end of his 130-day mandate, otherwise we cancel all of his sweetheart contracts? That would save us \$3 billion a year just alone on saying Elon Musk needs to follow the law, or we can just save the American taxpayer \$8 million a day, \$3 billion a year.

Already, we have heard that Mr. Musk is saying he wants to step back some from his role of robbing the Federal Government and the American taxpayer blind, but stepping back a little bit is not what is required under the law. The law says that if you want to be one of these fat cats with billions of dollars in Federal contracts and then be in the White House, look, I do not think you should be allowed to do that at all, but the law says you get to do it for 130 days. Those 130 days end on May 30.

So, my amendment is simple. If Elon Musk follows the law and leaves the Federal Government at the end of 130 days, then that is it. He followed the law. But if he does what it sounds like he is saying he is going to do and stay involved in the Federal Government, keep on running Cabinet meetings, keep on running the White House, keep on firing veterans and stealing their salaries to give his companies another big contract, then, no, we cancel those contracts, and we know exactly what the impact to the budget is. We will save ourselves \$3 billion a year. We will save the American taxpayer \$8 million every single day, but the choice would be up to Elon. And if the Republicans think that Elon Musk is going to follow the law and leave the government when he is supposed to at the end of May, then they should have no problem voting for my amendment. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. Any other Members seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the question is now on the Casar Amendment Number 2.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it. The amendment is not agreed to.

Ms. CROCKETT. And Mr. Chair, we would ask for a recorded vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

For what purpose does Mr. Casar seek recognition again?

Mr. CASAR. I seek recognition on my Amendment Number 4 at the desk.

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please distribute?

[Pause.]

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please report?

The CLERK. An amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print provided reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, offered by Mr. Casar of Texas.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve the point of order. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes to explain his amendment.

Mr. CASAR. Mr. Chairman, the Republicans on this Committee just voted no on canceling Elon Musk contracts if he violates the law and stays past 130 days. The Republicans on this Committee just voted no on Mr. Frost's amendment that would require the President of the United States to follow U.S. Supreme Court orders. At some point, we have got to have some shame on this Committee. So, my amendment—I would hope my Republican colleagues would vote for it—is that if a court or the Federal Government finds that Mr. Musk abused his power to enrich himself here over the last few months, then we would cancel his contract. If a court finds that the richest man on earth went in, used the Federal books, scraped people's data, steered contracts to himself, then we should maybe stop sending him \$8 million a day and save the

American taxpayer \$3 billion. That is the way that, not just Democrats, but conservatives, progressives, independents all across the country, want to see us save some money by saying these corporate grifters that use the government to enrich themselves, they should get cutoff.

And look, there is a House Republican majority today, but there could be a Democratic majority tomorrow or at least in under 2 years, and when we are sitting on this Committee and if we get a chance to have the subpoena power and look into this and find out that Elon Musk has used his power to enrich himself, the consequences could actually be much greater than just having his contracts cutoff. So, I ask my Republican colleagues, I know you voted no on Mr. Frost's amendments to say the President should follow the U.S. Supreme Court. I know you just voted no on my amendment that said if Mr. Musk stays over the 130 days, he should have his contracts canceled. At a minimum, I would ask that you vote for this amendment that says if Musk breaks the laws, if we find out from a court or from the Federal Government that he steered these contracts to himself, then we should not keep on rewarding him with billions in taxpayer dollars. That is the way we should be saving the American taxpayer money, not by kicking kids off of Medicaid or pulling school meals or firing veterans.

I yield back Mr. Chairman, and I would hope that at least one Republican Member of Congress would vote to say we will hold Mr. Musk accountable if he stays past the 130-day limit, we will hold Mr. Musk accountable if a court finds that he has been funneling money to himself. The news is out that he is seeking this multibillion-dollar contract for Trump's golden dome. The word is out that he is out there messing with the FAA, trying to get his Starlink contracts at the FAA. The word is out that he tried to get a \$400 million contract just recently for Tesla at the State Department, and then he got caught doing it. So, look, you may not think it is going to come out today, but it will come out eventually, and it would have been better if you voted yes to say we are going to cut-off Musk's contracts if he breaks the law, if he breaks the 130-day rule, if he breaks conflicts of interest, if he keeps on using his position to enrich himself. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. Any other Member seek recognition? Ms. Crockett?

Ms. CROCKETT. Yes. I would say that Mr. Casar has laid this out really plainly. You know, there used to be a time in which one of the mottos of the Republican Party was this idea that you all were the party of law and order, and I really think that it is very clear that it is anything but, when we have amendments that literally just say follow the law. I mean, right now, one of the things that we hear over and over and over about why it makes sense to throw people out of this country without any due process is because you are just saying that they broke the law, not that they had an opportunity to defend, not that we have any proof that they broke the law, but your word is enough to literally exile somebody and send them to a prison where they are doing God knows what.

But if we have a court that has found that this man has broken the law, it would be wise, if you really believe in law and order, to say that we will not continue to enrich the richest person in the

world with our tax dollars, especially when we are talking about the fact that we are trying to find savings, when we know for sure that he has broken the law. So, I appreciate Mr. Casar, because this is not about partisanship. This is about right versus wrong, and honestly, it is just about good old common sense. I think that is the one thing the American people are wishing that we had right now in government, is just a little bit of common sense, and it only makes sense that we would not continue to send somebody \$8 million a day or even more money than that, knowing that they literally are breaking the laws that we wrote. I will yield.

Chairman COMER. Does any other Member seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the question is now on the Casar amendment.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

Ms. CROCKETT. I would ask for a recorded vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

For what purpose does Ms. Lee seek recognition?

Ms. LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk, my amendment number 1.

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please distribute?

[Pause.]

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please designate?

The CLERK. Amendment Number 1 to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, offered by Ms. Lee of Pennsylvania.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order.

The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes to explain her amendment.

Ms. LEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This amendment would end the budget cuts if the Consumer Price Index increases by more than one percentage point above the annualized rate. The Consumer Price Index is an estimate of the level of prices of goods and services being bought by households, it essentially attracts price changes over time. Since my Republican colleagues are always praising Trump's impact on the economy and how low he is going to get prices, this amendment should not be a concern.

Trump practically ran on lowering the price of eggs, so this amendment, I think, would serve the best interest of all of us. But the reality is that prices have gone up across the board. Combined the price of meats, poultry, fish, and eggs saw a 1.3 percent monthly increase in March alone. Utility gas services increased 2.5 percent and electricity prices increased 0.9 percent. In February, home prices were up 2.9 percent compared to last year. Medicare, insurance, excuse me, clothing prices all went up.

This Administration has so far failed to make any dent in the cost of living crisis. Instead, we have gotten erratic tariff policies, removals of government watchdogs, gutting of Federal staff and cuts to critical Federal programs like Medicaid and Food Assistance, which only exacerbate this crisis.

This is not being caused by some serious outside force or immigrants or Federal workers or whoever else, the Republicans feel like blaming on any given day. This is a Trump made crisis entirely. We are gearing up for a recession based on his policies and his actions.

So, let us be clear, working-class Americans will be hit hardest with all of these price hikes and job losses, while the wealthiest are being handed trillions in dollars' worth of tax breaks. While home ownership remains a pipe dream for so many Americans, private equity firms are gobbling up those houses and setting rents at sky high rates. While people are watching their retirement accounts plummet due to stock market volatility, Trump insiders, possibly even on this Committee, are making out like bandits by selling at the right time.

A recession will only shift more money and more resources to the top one percent. The wealth gap will only grow larger. It is a shame how much these reconciliation bills are punching down and putting the burden on those with the least means and power.

In this bill alone, we have pieces that take away from the monthly paychecks of Federal workers and reduce their pensions and for what? Nothing in this bill will do anything to lower costs to make life better for folks. Its only goal is to pay for the trillions in tax breaks for the ultra-wealthy. So, whether you live in an urban or rural area or if you are a Republican or a Democrat, the cost of living is a universal concern and being able to not live just day-to-day, but to thrive is a goal we can all get behind. And nothing in this bill or any of the other reconciliation bills will make that a reality. So, I urge my colleagues to support this amendment. And with that, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. Does any Member seek recognition? Ms. Crockett?

Ms. CROCKETT. Briefly. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. This is an amazing amendment brought by the brilliant gentlelady out of Pennsylvania, because one of the things that we consistently hear every time we start one of these hearings is that the Republicans had a mandate and that that is why we ended up with Donald Trump. And I can tell you that as I travel the country warning them that what is happening was going to happen, people would say things like, the price of eggs are so high. And so, this amendment specifically deals with issues around the Consumer Price Index.

So, let us talk about the price of eggs, because for whatever reason, we have yet to have a hearing on the price of eggs when that was really the one big thing. And I remember the big guy that is in the White House saying that he was going to reduce the cost of eggs on day one. But what we see is that the national average price of eggs in March 2025 was \$6.23, a 6 percent increase from the previous month, a 60 percent increase year-to-year and USDA said egg prices could climb 41 percent this year.

When we start to talk about things such as our energy—in March, natural gas prices increased 3.6 percent and electricity prices increased nine percent, fuel and oil prices increased 0.8 percent, utility gas services increased 2.5 percent. The national average for a gallon of gas is currently \$3.17, nowhere near the \$1.98 that President Trump claimed last week. I just want to make sure we get the facts out there.

And finally, the other area that we typically talk about that really impacts everyday working people is housing. When we look at shelter prices, which measure the cost of housing, rent, lodging away from home, and owners' equivalent rent, it rose 0.2 percent in March. In February 2025, home prices were up 2.9 percent compared to last year, selling for a median of \$424,000. The number of homes sold was down five percent year over year.

Listen, we are in a crisis and they are pretending that the solution is going to be cutting everything that those of us that make this country actually go, is the solution. Right now, we are cutting jobs as it relates to the Federal Government. Right now, because of the failed policies around tariffs, we know that we are looking at losing plants. They said that they were going to bring plants. They just announced that we had two auto dealers that were going to shut down approximately 40,000 jobs.

As they then go after NIH, we know that in the state of Alabama, the largest employer in the state of Alabama is the University of Alabama. They are looking at losing jobs because they will not have research dollars. The only thing that they are doing is hurting us. It is the reason, if we are going to talk about numbers and mandates, it is the reason that the only person in recent modern times to have the lowest approval ratings at their 100-day mark is the same person the first time they were in and now this time.

It is time for us to get serious and talk about what will grow our economy, what will bring more money in, what will make sure that people can move up from working poor to middle class, and maybe even reach this higher level that so many of you all listen to, this upper echelon, this rich level, because that is what is supposed to set us apart in this country. We are supposed to live in a country where everyone has an opportunity to go from rags to literally riches.

And so, I am asking my colleagues to start looking out for the people that elected them and this is one way that we can do it by supporting this amendment of Ms. Lee. And with that, I will yield.

Mr. HIGGINS. [Presiding.] The gentlelady yields. Do any other Members wish to speak on this amendment?

[No response.]

Mr. HIGGINS. Do any other Members wish to speak on this amendment?

[No response.]

Mr. HIGGINS. Hearing none, the question is on the amendment offered by the gentlelady.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Mr. HIGGINS. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Mr. HIGGINS. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

Ms. CROCKETT. And Mr. Chair, we would ask for a recorded vote.

Mr. HIGGINS. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

Are there further amendments on this bill?

Ms. LEE. Yes. I have an amendment at the desk. My amendment, Lee amendment 2.

Mr. HIGGINS. The clerk will distribute the amendment. The clerk will designate the amendment.

The CLERK. The amendment number 2 to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to a House Concurrent Resolution 14, offered by Ms. Lee of Pennsylvania.

Mr. HIGGINS. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentlewoman, Ms. Lee, is recognized for 5 minutes to explain her amendment.

Ms. LEE. Thank you, Mr. Chair. This amendment would end the budget cuts if the President or any executive agency deports any person in the United States without due process under the law, and I think that is incredibly important because we can all agree how important due process is in this country. This amendment is not just about immigration. It is about whether America will remain a nation governed by the laws and freedoms that we value. If due process becomes optional, it threatens all Americans, and we should all be sounding the alarm.

We are seeing people straight up disappear to El Salvador. Two hundred and eighty-eight men, including teens, have been taken from their homes and families with no notice, no due process, and no information about why nor any opportunity to challenge it. We are seeing the Department of Justice green light warrantless searches of homes by ICE agents. That could mean an agent in plain clothes busting into homes with no probable cause, no signoff from a judge, nothing. That is a terribly dangerous prospect.

It is already clear that Trump is not targeting actual threats, but manufacturing reasons to disappear and deport lawfully present individuals, long-term residents and families. Report after report have indicated that most of the people being disappeared and deported have little to no criminal record. We just cannot sit here and say it will not happen to me because we do not know that. Trump has already defied court orders, including those from the Supreme Court. We are beyond the slippery slope. This is a defining moment of who is on the right side or the wrong side of history. Due process is such a closely held core principle of this country that it is in the Constitution twice, first in the Fifth Amendment, which says to the Federal Government that "No one shall be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law," and then later in the Fourteenth Amendment, which is applied to the states. This should not be a radical opinion.

My Republican colleagues are always speaking about how much they and we love the Constitution, but I am afraid that they only love it when it benefits them. Nowhere in the Constitution does it

says that these rights are only for American citizens. If you are here, you are under protection. That means immigrants, too. So, I urge my colleagues to support this amendment. It is an opportunity for us to get our country back on course, and I yield back.

Mr. HIGGINS. The gentlelady yields. I recognize myself to speak on the amendment. I oppose the amendment. I support the executive branch effort to protect our country and preserve the peace of our republic by deporting criminal illegals, and I encourage my colleagues to oppose the amendment. I yield the balance of my time.

Ms. CROCKETT. Will the gentleman yield for a question?

Mr. HIGGINS. Does Ms. Crockett wish to be recognized?

Ms. CROCKETT. I can. I was going to ask you a question, though.

Mr. HIGGINS. Ms. Crockett, I am yielding my time, but I will be happy to recognize you, ma'am.

Ms. CROCKETT. OK.

Mr. HIGGINS. Ms. Crockett is recognized for 5 minutes to speak on the amendment.

Ms. CROCKETT. Thank you. So, I think that where we differ, as it relates to what is going on in our country, is that No. 1, the Constitution, as it has been laid out by Ms. Lee, specifically guarantees the right to due process. And what we are trying to grapple with is this idea of, if you give somebody due process, that does not necessarily mean that they would not be deported. They simply would be able to, say, to enter into a defense of whatever allegations are being made against them and considering the fact that none of us are perfect on this earth, and I know you agree with me, because I know what you believe, right?

No one is perfect, so people can make mistakes, and this gives us an opportunity to catch mistakes. This is not about Democrats saying, you know what? We want certain lawless bad people in this country. Instead, what it is saying is that we believe in the Constitution. No matter if we are a Democrat, Republican, or Independent, we believe in our founding documents and we believe in the Constitution, and this means that you do not have an accident where Abrego is sent out of the country. This means you do not have an accident where you are incarcerating U.S. citizens. This means you do not have an accident when U.S. children are being deported to the extent that we have a U.S. citizen child who was literally supposed to be receiving cancer treatment being deported.

It gives us an opportunity to catch any potential mistakes by making sure that there is a process. All due process gives you—it does not give you a get-out-of-jail-free card. It does not give you permission to stay when you are not allowed to stay. It does not allow you to evade the law. In fact, it makes sure that the law works the way that it is supposed to work. It is what every single criminal defendant has always been guaranteed, regardless of their status, so that somebody cannot just go out and say this person committed that crime, but instead, there would be a process that involved more than just one person's opinion.

And so, I guess that is my big question is, why are we afraid of process? If we know that these are bad people, if we believe that the persons that are seeking to make sure that we rid our country of them, then why would we? In fact, this gives you all more time to show. You get to show and tell. You get to go and lay it all out

and make sure that the entire public gets to see this person did this, this person did that, and this is why we send them away. It, honestly, instills some sense of confidence in the entire country and what you are doing. And they get to say, you know what, Mr. President? You were right. We had too many of those bad people, and now we know that this person did this, that, or the other. So, the only thing that we are asking to do is actually to follow the law and the highest law in the land, supposedly, is the Constitution. Thank you, and I will yield.

Mr. HIGGINS. The gentlelady yields. Do any other Members wish to speak on this amendment?

[No response.]

Mr. HIGGINS. Hearing none, the question is on the amendment, offered by the gentlelady, Ms. Lee.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Mr. HIGGINS. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Mr. HIGGINS. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

Ms. CROCKETT. I would ask for a recorded vote.

Mr. HIGGINS. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

For what purpose does the gentlelady, Lee, seek recognition?

Ms. LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk, Lee Amendment 3.

Mr. HIGGINS. The clerk will distribute the amendment.

[Pause.]

Mr. HIGGINS. The clerk will designate the amendment.

The CLERK. Amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print provided for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, as offered by Ms. Lee of Pennsylvania.

Mr. HIGGINS. Without objection, the amendment is considered read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes to explain and speak on her amendment.

Ms. LEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I really think that this one really gets at the heart of this Committee and the work that we are entrusted with doing. This amendment would end the budget cuts if the President, a special government employee, or a member of the Cabinet violates ethic rules by using their public office for their own private gain; for the endorsement of any product, service, or enterprise; or for the private gain of friends, relatives, or persons with whom the employee is affiliated with in a non-governmental capacity.

Simply put, if President Trump or Elon Musk, or any other agency head uses their official position to make themselves rich, their family rich or to sell some product, then all of these budget changes Republicans are running through should end. My Republican colleagues seem to act like no ethic violations are happening, so again, this one really should not be a problem. They will not because they know that Trump has sold out the presidency to the highest bidder. They know that this Administration's actions would

cause this bill to almost immediately expire. They are seeing exactly what the rest of us are seeing so far.

Trump has turned the White House lawn into a Tesla dealership. So, while Americans are struggling to afford groceries, he is showing off the features of a car made by his bestie, campaign donor and employee, Musk. Trump has been hawking his official Trump meme coin and gutting crypto regulations. People may not be able to afford healthcare, but if they are a top Trump meme coin holder, they get to go to an exclusive gala with him. He also holds court in his private members-only club, Mar-a-Lago, his so-called Winter White House, while most people cannot afford to buy their own house.

Americans are struggling to get by while watching this administration get richer and richer, and it is not just Trump. A Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations memo out this week estimates that Elon Musk and his company stand “to avoid at least \$2.37 billion in legal liability through his efforts to gut the Federal workforce and exert influence over Federal Agencies.” He has also made billions in government contracts, none of which conveniently have been touched by DOGE or Republican funding cuts. Trump and Republicans are scapegoating and demonizing Federal employees so that nobody is paying attention to the absolute grift that is happening in the executive branch.

This is not a monarchy. We do not have to sit by idly while an old, out-of-touch billionaire enriches himself and his family. We have a duty as a co-equal branch of government to put a stop to these blatant ethic violations. Our government should be answering to the people, not to the highest bidder and not to the biggest check. We should be working to clean up the corruption that has been allowed to rot from the inside, and that rot is not coming from our dedicated Federal workers. It is coming from Trump and his top officials. We deserve leaders who serve the people, not themselves, so I urge my colleagues to support this amendment, and with that, I yield back.

Mr. HIGGINS. The gentlelady yields. I recognize myself for 5 minutes to speak on the amendment.

I oppose the amendment and I encourage my colleagues to oppose the amendment. Republicans stand against Title 5 violation. Any violation of the Code of Federal Regulations is contrary to the core principles of our country, and Republicans stand united against that. There are sufficient laws and mechanisms for enforcement already in existence, replete throughout Federal law and precedent within our judicial system to protect our country against violations of the Code of Federal Regulations. So, I oppose the amendment, and I encourage my colleagues to oppose. I yield the balance of my time.

Does anyone else seek recognition to speak on this amendment?

[No response.]

Mr. HIGGINS. Hearing none, the question is on the amendment, offered by the gentlelady, Ms. Lee.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Mr. HIGGINS. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Mr. HIGGINS. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Chair, we would ask for a recorded vote.

Mr. HIGGINS. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

For what purpose does the gentlelady, Ms. Lee, seek recognition?

Ms. LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk, Lee Amendment 4.

Mr. HIGGINS. The clerk will distribute the amendment to all Members, and the clerk will designate the amendment.

The CLERK. Amendment Number 4, to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, offered by Ms. Lee of Pennsylvania.

Mr. HIGGINS. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentlewoman, Ms. Lee, is recognized for 5 minutes to speak on her amendment.

Ms. LEE. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appeal—oh, excuse me, jumping ahead—we did not have to do that. The amendment would add additional exemptions to avoid these egregious new filing fees for Merit System Protection Board appeals. Those exemptions would include suitability determinations of Federal employment practices, reduction-in-force actions, performance-based removals, or terminations of probationary employees and actions related to an employer's denial of reinstatement.

The Merit System Protection Board was created to protect Federal workers against partisan attacks and other prohibited practices, so the very things you are seeing in the news, like all of these purges of Federal employees. When we talk about a system of checks and balances, this is one of those checks on executive branch power. When an employee is fired for, say, a DOGE teenage minion randomly adding their name to a list, they can submit an appeal to the Merit System Protection Board. In that hearing, the Agency will then have to prove that that action was warranted. But Republicans do not want those checks and balances. They seemingly want to revert back to a pre-Revolutionary War days when we were governed by an unfettered king. They are definitely not taking up their role as a co-equal branch of government and putting a stop to the illegal firings and funding cuts, and we can see from this bill that they are trying to make it easier for Trump and Musk to do what they want.

Just look at the bill we are marking up today. In one section, they are trying to force new government employees to choose between having workplace protections, like being able to appeal their firing in the Merit System Protection Board, or having more money in their monthly paycheck by not having to pay an additional five percent into their retirement accounts. Then, in this section, they want to force a filing fee on those that still have those protections and want to appeal their dismissal. Republicans are telling a person who feels they were unlawfully fired, that while they understand they may be stressed about no longer getting a paycheck and having to pay for an attorney to appeal the decision, but now they also have to pay about \$350 in a filing fee. The entire point is to

discourage appealing at all. Three hundred and fifty dollars may not seem like a lot when we are talking about folks who have billions of dollars at their disposal, but to the average person, that might be a utility bill or their monthly grocery budget or their children's prescription drug costs. It is a direct attack on low-income employees and a barrier to justice and due process. This bill is forcing the Federal workforce to foot the bill for tax cuts for billionaires while Trump and the DOGE crew carry out a full-scale assault against them. It is a shameful tactic.

I urge my colleague to support this amendment, which expands exemptions to this harmful filing fee. It is incredibly simple, and with that, I yield back.

Mr. HIGGINS. The gentlelady yields. I recognize myself for 5 minutes to speak on the amendment.

I am going to oppose the amendment, although I appreciate the spirit of the language of the amendment and avail myself to the gentlelady and her colleagues in a future legislative endeavor to consider this type of language. I oppose because, although I do acknowledge the intention and the spirit behind the gentlelady's amendment, the legislation we are considering today is carefully constructed to comply with congressional rules of reconciliation and budget considerations. Therefore, I encourage all my colleagues to oppose the amendment, and I yield the balance of my time. Do any other Members wish to speak on this amendment?

[No response.]

Mr. HIGGINS. Hearing none, the question is on the amendment offered by the gentlelady, Ms. Lee.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Mr. HIGGINS. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Mr. HIGGINS. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

Ms. CROCKETT. I would ask for a recorded vote.

Mr. HIGGINS. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the questions will be postponed.

For what purpose does the gentleman, Mr. Garcia, seek recognition?

Mr. GARCIA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have an amendment at the desk, Garcia number 1.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you. So, the clerk will distribute the amendment to all Members.

[Pause.]

Mr. HIGGINS. The clerk will designate the amendment.

The CLERK. Amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, offered by Mr. Garcia of California.

Mr. HIGGINS. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentleman, Mr. Garcia, is recognized for 5 minutes to speak on his amendment.

Mr. GARCIA. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that it is very clear from all of us that today's debate and discussion has

made the House Republican agenda very clear. It is giveaways to billionaires, huge cuts to healthcare and Social Security, attacks on due process, and we should not lose sight, of course, of the other big crisis happening right now that Donald Trump, of course, is causing. Now in the coming weeks, every American is going to be impacted by Donald Trump's insane and destructive trade and tariff agenda. Now, we already know that the Trump tariffs are just a sales tax that hits the poor and working people the hardest.

I also represent one of the biggest ports in the U.S., the second largest container port in the country, and I will tell you right now that goods simply are not coming. Last week, trucking volumes coming out of L.A. collapsed to levels we only see during Christmas and New Years. Trucking, which is a No. 1 job for non-college educated men, are seeing huge rollbacks. We could also see huge numbers of bankruptcies and layoffs in the coming months as a supply chain freezes up. Now, small businesses, we know, will not be able to buy the goods they sell. Prices will skyrocket for products, and others may simply vanish from the shelves. The uncertainty is just as dangerous, whether you are in shipping and trucking, a small business in the import or export business, all of these businesses are being impacted by the Trump tariffs that are nothing, but pure chaos.

Businesses and small businesses are going to be hit first, but our consumers will be next. These tariffs will not bring back jobs because no firm can invest in new factories. There is too much uncertainty and businesses cannot plan long-term tariff rates, and they cannot just import machines or construction materials. The job market is just too uncertain. These Trump tariffs will not bring us a better deal because China will not even pick up Donald Trump's calls, and it is beginning to look more desperate every single day. No one benefits from this insane and dangerous trade agenda.

But there is maybe one group that appears to be benefiting and that is connected insiders. We know that prior to these Trump tariff announcements, and in between, there have been people, including Members of Congress, maybe some on this Committee, that have purchased between tens and hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of stock. By the way, between April 8 and 9, the day before President Trump caused his sweeping global tariff crisis. Now, we know that even the day before Trump's announcement, a certain Member and maybe others dumped between \$50,000 and \$100,000 in Treasury bills, according to required public disclosures made to the House.

Now, of course, there is no direct evidence today that anyone has been committed of doing any wrongdoing and certainly we have no evidence that anyone had any advance notice of what Trump was doing and his decision to undo some of the tariffs. But we do know that the day before the announcement, Trump posted, "This is a great time to buy." This should raise concerns to all of us. The public needs to trust us. Who knew about Trump's chaotic tariff announcements, who invested in the stock market, and what insider information did they know? Now, we do not know specifics of the announcement, of course, and who was in the room and made these decisions and who purchased all the stock. We also do not know

who is getting direct insider information on future announcements and future deals.

So, this amendment brings clarity and it is quite simple. It will suspend the implementation of this toxic and dangerous legislation if we determine that the President or head of any executive agency or any member or employee or contractor of DOGE is found to have committed insider trading related to the imposition of the tariffs. This is a common sense, good governance measure to ensure trust and honesty and to bring a certainty to our tariff policy. It removes an incentive to fuel chaos in order to profit and will provide much needed certainty. I urge all Members to support this amendment and I yield back.

Mr. HIGGINS. The gentleman yields back. I recognize myself for 5 minutes to speak on the amendment.

I will be in opposition to the amendment. I am also in opposition, along with all my colleagues, one would hope, on both sides of the aisle, to insider trading that results in personal benefit for any Republican or any Democrat. Today's legislation is not the venue for that. I am going to oppose the amendment, but again, I offer to myself and my colleagues in my office at the avail of my Democrat colleagues to work toward legislation and investigation into any illicit or illegal insider trading that may be found to exist, including within this body, but so, of course, to include the executive branch. So, I am in opposition to the amendment. I yield the balance of my time. Does anyone else seek recognition? Mrs. Luna of Florida is recognized for 5 minutes to speak on the amendment.

Mrs. LUNA. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Higgins. First of all, I obviously am supporting what the Oversight Republican Committee is doing here for this entire process, but I did want to speak to Mr. Garcia. Mr. Garcia, please let it be known, if you would like to do a discharge petition banning insider trading for Members of Congress, I will happily support that. I think that it is disgusting that people do that. I share Mr. Higgins' sentiment and I think that majority of the American people want that, so I would be happy to support that. We can get the ball rolling. Discharge petition away on that, please. Thank you.

Mr. GARCIA. Well, if I can respond to that. I appreciate that, Representative Luna. I agree with you.

Mr. HIGGINS. Does the gentlelady yield her time?

Mrs. LUNA. Yes.

Mr. HIGGINS. The gentleman is recognized.

Mr. GARCIA. Thank you. I appreciate that, Representative Luna. I also agree with you that there should be absolutely no insider trading in Congress. In fact, I believe there should be no stock trading of individual stocks by Members of Congress, period. I support legislation to do so, and so, I am looking forward our conversation to move this issue forward. So, thank you.

Mr. HIGGINS. The gentleman yields. Do any other Members wish to speak on this amendment?

[No response.]

Mr. HIGGINS. Hearing none, the question is on the amendment, offered by Mr. Garcia.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Mr. HIGGINS. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Mr. HIGGINS. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it. The amendment is not agreed to.

Ms. CROCKETT. And Mr. Chair, I would ask for a recorded vote.

Mr. HIGGINS. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

Does the gentleman seek recognition? Mr. Subramanyam?

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Yes.

Mr. HIGGINS. Do you seek recognition?

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Yes.

Mr. HIGGINS. The gentleman is recognized.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have an amendment at the desk.

Mr. HIGGINS. The clerk will distribute the amendment to all Members.

[Pause.]

Mr. HIGGINS. The clerk will designate the amendment.

The CLERK. Amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print provided for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, offered by Mr. Subramanyam of Virginia.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HIGGINS. Without objection, the amendment is considered read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes to speak on his amendment.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The amendment is simple. It would strike Section 90001, which would increase Federal employee's contributions to their retirement benefits in its entirety. This provision is not savings. It is a pay cut for longest-serving civil servants who have invaluable, irreplaceable knowledge, and experience serving the American people, and this is just going to worsen the continued brain drain of the Federal Government and folks who serve.

I have heard from constituents all around my district who have already left the Federal workforce as a result of this Administration's actions. They are physicists and technologists, people who keep us safe, people who develop cutting-edge research and technologies, and make government more efficient and cost less, and many of them are also veterans who choose to continue serving their country after their time in uniform, and still others might make the choice to leave if these provisions are passed into law.

I will tell you the story of one Federal employee in my district. He said that, "I have proudly served as a Federal employee for over 20 years. Throughout my career, I have worked diligently, often for significantly less pay than my counterparts in the private sector, and to change or take away these promised benefits just a few years before I am eligible to retire feels both unjust and deeply discouraging." And he and others have noted that a lot of people, who the Federal Government has been trying to recruit for many years, now do not want to come, and we are losing some of our top people.

In fact, this amendment is trying to stop this brain drain by showing that some of the senior people who will be most affected

by this and some of the veterans and some of the experts that will be affected by this, they are going to leave. We are going to lose them, and we are going to lose their expertise. So, what we are trying to do here today with this provision is to not punish the expertise and longevity of some of these Federal employees by cutting the pay of those who have been here the longest. And while it might raise a little bit of revenue, the costs of this to our Federal Government and to the American people will be far higher. And there are better ways to make government more efficient without attacking the hard-earned retirement benefits Federal employees have been paying into their entire careers.

I would be more than happy to work across the aisle on bipartisan solutions, but sadly, this is not where we are at today. And so, I urge my colleagues to support my amendment and oppose this provision. I yield back.

Mr. HIGGINS. The gentleman yields. I recognize myself to speak on the amendment.

I will oppose the amendment which completely repeals Section 90001 of our Committee Print. This amendment would significantly reduce deficit reduction in the Committee Print by over \$30 billion in revenue over the course of 10 years. This amendment further would result in the underlying Committee Print conflicting with our clear reconciliation instructions of \$50 billion in net budget savings, a component of the larger reconciliation instructions that we are compelled to abide by. We have a nation that suffers from almost \$37 trillion in debt. Making a minor adjustment in Federal spending is not only an obligation of our Congress, but reflective of the oath that we have sworn to protect and preserve our republic. So, I am in opposition to the amendment, and I yield the balance of my time.

Does any other Member wish to be recognized? Ms. Crockett is recognized for 5 minutes to speak on the amendment.

Ms. CROCKETT. Thank you so much, Mr. Chair, and I do support this amendment. You know, there is a theme that we keep hearing on this side of the aisle where it seems like we are constantly talking about real people, working people, the people that continue to make this country go, and the idea that we continue to violate people's trust, people that have dedicated years and years of service to us, whether it was in the form of being veterans or whether it was literally just in the form of being a dedicated government worker like my mom.

The issue that we have is that we keep pretending in this Committee and, actually, in this Congress that the only way that we can save money is if we go after the people that literally are at the bottom. When I say, "the bottom," one of the best things that I have seen on social media here recently said that the top 1 percent own more wealth than the bottom 90 percent. The bottom 90 percent. One percent own more than the bottom 90 percent. We are talking about this wealth gap that is just going to continue to widen at a time in which every single policy decision we are making is only making life more expensive and making it more difficult for those that are just trying to survive, especially those that work for our Federal Government.

The fact is, we are saying, you know what? We are going to take away access to resources that you had because we want to save money while at the same time, as it has been laid out by Ms. Lee and me and others, about the fact that the cost to eat is going up, the cost to get to work is going up, the cost to put a roof over your head is going up, the cost to put clothes on the backs of your children is going up, all at the same time we are saying and we are going to give you less. We are going to take away from you. This is not what makes us America the beautiful.

And so, I think that this is an opportunity to do what is right, and if we want to start talking about how we get out of debt, we can start with the top one percenters. And maybe let the 90 percenters continue to at least just try to survive in this very difficult environment. With that, I will yield. I will yield back to the author of the amendment.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Thank you. I want to add as well, again, if the goal here is to save money, if the goal here is to pay down the debt, why are you firing the very people who actually save us a lot of money when it comes to some of these programs? Why are you firing the people who will actually do cutting-edge research that will save us money on things, like, healthcare, on defense later on? I mean, you know, look at what is happening. We are having a brain drain in technologists at the Department of Defense now. We are having a brain drain in healthcare experts as well at HHS, and some of them have been fired. Others have just left. And I have talked to many people who are managers, who are leaders in the agencies who are being told to cut people, the very people that they are begging to try to keep.

And so, when you are trying to now look at cutting retirement benefits for Federal workers, you are not going to be able to attract and retain the best talent. A lot of these Federal workers actually could make a lot more money in the private sector, like the story that I told, but instead, they are being told that we do not care about them, that we do not want to protect their retirement, that now it depends on who is President, whether or not they are valued, right? And so, what we are doing here could end up being irreversible damage and could put us in a position where we can no longer attract good people, people who actually save the government money.

I mean, I heard someone say that this is going to save us \$30 billion, but think of all the money some of these folks we are losing save us long-term. Probably a lot more than \$30 billion, right? If you are in a department in charge of making a trillion-dollar program or a multibillion dollar program efficient and you are fired, who is going to make that program efficient, right? So, again, we are doing things that we think are saving money, but they are actually costing us a lot more money long term, so this is bad not just for the Federal workers, this is bad for every American taxpayer. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. [Presiding.] Does any other Member seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, we will now vote on the Subramanyam amendment. I was pronouncing it right. I have got the phonetics and I still mispronounce it, I will be honest.

But all those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, say no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it. The amendment is not agreed to.

Ms. CROCKETT. We would ask for a recorded vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

For what purpose does Ms. Randall seek recognition?

Ms. RANDALL. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have an amendment at the desk.

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please distribute?

[Pause.]

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please report the amendment?

The CLERK. An amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, offered by Ms. Randall from Washington.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes to explain her amendment.

Ms. RANDALL. Thank you, Mr. Chair. You know, in my district, nearly a quarter of my constituents are enrolled in Medicaid. That is around 188,000 people, and I have three community health centers, seven rural hospitals, and 90 rural health clinics. It takes, I do not know, about 5 hours to drive from one corner of my district to the other, and sometimes one of the roads is washed out because of storms, and having an option to choose another healthcare facility is not always available to people.

And Medicaid for not only the individuals who receive those benefits, but also for the health clinics and the hospitals is a lifeline. Our rural hospitals are struggling to keep their doors open as they are. And with the potential cuts that might be included in the, you know, budget instructions for this reconciliation package, my rural health system threatens to flounder, and I am not alone. It is not just my district or Democratic districts where we rely so strongly on Medicaid. You know, in Arizona 2, 263,276 people are on Medicaid; in North Carolina 5, 201,163 people are on Medicaid; and in Louisiana 3, 265,604 people are on Medicaid, and the rural health centers, the hospitals, the doctors' offices that serve those patients rely on Medicaid, too.

And, you know, our neighbors, our healthcare providers, our community members are telling me, the town halls we do in our districts, and the emails they send to our office, and the meetings we have, that they are worried. They are worried that cutting \$880 billion from the Energy and Commerce Subcommittee will mean cuts to Medicaid. In fact, the Congressional Budget Office had said that those level of cuts are not possible without significant programmatic changes and benefit cuts to Medicaid.

I know we have talked in the Government Operations Subcommittee about improper payments and the efforts to root out waste, fraud, and abuse. And I am speaking for myself, but I think also my Democratic colleagues, none of us want to see a wasteful and fraudulent system that takes away benefits from the people and the providers who depend on them. But in Washington State, we talked to our healthcare authority, and of the 2 million Medicaid payments, only 30 to 40 percent of the fraudulent or improper allegations were proven credible, which is a .0002-percent fraud rate. That is a pretty satisfying rate.

And I have heard colleagues on the other side say that they are not actually trying to cut Medicaid, which I hope is the truth, and this simple amendment says that if the Administration makes any cuts to Medicaid or Medicare, it requires the immediate expiration of the Republican budget cuts. And I ask for support, and I yield the balance of my time to Representative Simon.

Ms. SIMON. Ms. Randall, thank you so much. You know, at UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital in my district that I just toured, 70 percent of the children who are being served by that hospital are reliant on these services—heart transplants, stem cell transplants, cancer patients—all under the age of 18. You know, without us literally saying yes, we will make sure that these families have medical support for their children in their worst, their most harshest times, really, who are we? So, I want to thank you for the amendment. Families deserve our support, particularly families with sick children. Thank you, Ms. Randall. I will yield my time.

Chairman COMER. Does any other Member seek recognition? You seek recognition?

Ms. CROCKETT. I do.

Chairman COMER. Ms. Crockett.

Ms. CROCKETT. Thank you so much, Mr. Chair, and, you know, I really want to break this down so that people understand what the gentlelady is trying to do. She is not only fighting for her constituents, and I do appreciate the fact that she is so in tune and in touch with her constituents, that she is listening to their very real stories, but she is honestly trying to save all of our constituents, including yours, Mr. Chair. When we look at your district, which is Kentucky 1, it says that in your district, approximately 235,000 people are on Medicaid, and they are at risk of losing their healthcare under this budget plan, and here is the deal. For those of you sitting at home and watching and wondering what exactly is 253,000, I think what I said is—yes, 253,000—that is approximately one-third the size of our districts.

So, just imagine, Mr. Chair, what you could do by supporting this amendment is make sure that you are protecting one-third of your own constituents. Even if we are not looking at anyone else's district, this is a lifeline for so many people. And I just do not know why the theme has consistently been beat up on those that need it the most instead of going and finding the cuts where we know we can do it, which is basically by making sure that we increase the tax rate on certain people. Then we will have all the money we need. We will be just fine.

But the idea that we are really solving anything, we are not because we know that right now, we are going to take resources away

from people that literally may be the difference between life and death, while at the same time, we know that we still have to raise the debt ceiling because there is still so much debt. We know that the last time Mr. Trump was in office, that by the time he left, there was an additional \$8 trillion that was added to the budget. And just after this one first budget situation that we are about to go through, we are talking about adding another \$5 trillion. And so, I think that we need to really get to the heart of the problem.

We are a country that is continually growing, and that is what makes us fantastic. In fact, you know, recently, they are offering \$5,000. I do not know where they are going to get this \$5,000 from to give everybody to have a baby, but that is the new thing that is being offered because they want more people. What we cannot do is keep saying things like, oh, we are pro-life, we are pro-life, we are pro-life. But then once the life is here, when it comes to making sure that we can literally just be good Christians, if we want to go there with it, we are not. It is more than just saying that we believe in God. It is more than saying that we study the Word of God. It is actually about what are we doing when it comes down to the policies. And let me tell you, there is nothing godly about taking vulnerable people and taking away their healthcare all in the name of billionaires having more money in their pockets. I will yield.

Chairman COMER. Do any other Member seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the question is now on the Randall amendment.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Chair, we would ask for a recorded vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

For what purpose does Ms. Randall seek recognition?

Ms. RANDALL. I have a second amendment at the desk, Mr. Chair.

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please distribute?

[Pause.]

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please report?

The CLERK. A second amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, offered by Ms. Randall of Washington.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes to explain her amendment.

Ms. RANDALL. Thank you, Mr. Chair. You know, we have already talked a little bit about retirement fairness in this Committee, and I think there is some bipartisan support to retirement fairness, to supporting the agreement that we have made with Federal workers

who have served our country. And the amendment before us, it would attach the text of H.R. 1522, the Federal Retirement Fairness Act, previously introduced by Ranking Member Connolly.

You know, this is a bipartisan bill with 80 co-sponsors, and I am proud to be one of them, and this legislation would restore the option for Federal employees to buy back their time spent as temporary or seasonal employees to count it toward their retirement eligibility. And in a lot of worksites around the country, a lot of Federal jobs, we have folks who begin their work in the Postal Service, in the Forest Service as temporary or seasonal and then get hired on as permanent, but those months or years as temporary or seasonal employees do not count toward their retirement eligibility. This is a cost-neutral solution since employees fund their contributions. And you know, we just deserve to make this promise to a Federal workforce who is just getting attacked on a daily basis and who, in the underlying amendment in the nature of a substitute, are getting many of their retirement benefits decreased or eliminated, getting their worker protections weakened.

But this is a way that we could ensure that rural post offices in particular, who are struggling to hire workers can continue recruiting temporary or seasonal employees, and then allow them to stay by giving this retention, sort of a retention promise that they are able to catch up those payments to their retirement service. And I encourage our colleagues to vote yes, and I yield the balance of my time, Mr. Chair.

Chairman COMER. Does any other Member seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the question is now on the Randall Amendment Number 2.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the chair, the noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

Mr. LYNCH. I request a recorded vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote is ordered. A recorded vote will be dispensed with.

For what purpose does Ms. Randall seek recognition?

Ms. RANDALL. Thank you. I have a Randall Amendment Number 3 at the desk.

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please report the Randall Amendment Number 3?

The CLERK. Amendment Number 3 to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, offered by Ms. Randall of Washington.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes to explain her amendment.

Ms. RANDALL. Thank you, Mr. Chair. You know, on behalf of the 27,000 Federal employees I represent, I am working to ensure that we are not increasing their costs of employment and instituting

new cost barriers for them to challenge agency misconduct or wrongdoing. You know, I am incredibly concerned that this bill, the underlying bill, would chill the reporting and appeal process with the Merit System Protection Board by requiring them to pay for the complaints that they may seek to make.

The Merit System Protection Board filings already come with costs such as attorney fees, but imposing, as the underlying bill does, additional costs on employees who simply want to see justice, creates barriers to justice and due process. This would disproportionately target lower income employees, making them more vulnerable to being mistreated at work. And that is why I am filing this amendment to prevent any language that would deter current or former employees from filing an appeal with the Merit System Protection Board.

And, you know, our country and our communities cannot thrive without safe workplaces and the ability for folks to seek relief from being mistreated in the workforce, and, you know, our strong Federal workforce is what ensures that, you know, our democracy is protected and our future is bright, and we owe it to them to have their backs. And I would encourage my colleagues on this Committee to also vote in support of this amendment, and I yield the remaining balance of my time to the Ranking Member.

Mr. LYNCH. I thank the gentlelady. Let me just try to explain the impacts of not adopting the gentlelady's amendment. So, right now, if an adverse decision is made initially by an agency or employer, normally the person would be able to appeal that directly to the Merit System Protection Board, and it is not an expensive process, but absent that access, you drive people to court, which is also expensive, both for the government and the agency, but also for the employee. So, by adopting this amendment, we avoid that eventuality. We actually can handle it.

That is why the Merit System Protection Board works because it is much, much cheaper than any alternative. It is already the more cost effective way of doing this. It is also one step removed from the workplace. In other words, you might have a decision being made as a result of a reduction in force or a decision made by one individual manager that may be totally uncalled for and unjustified, and perhaps illegal or a violation of a statutory protection. So, that next step is the cheapest, most efficient, and most immediate way of resolving that dispute. And as a former union president and a union labor attorney, this does not save us money. This actually will cost us money because of not just the \$350 appeal fee. That is the small part of this. The larger cost will be involvement of multiple teams of lawyers and much longer, more expensive involvement by the courts, the civil courts. So, I think the gentlelady's amendment is well stated, and it makes a lot of sense if we are actually trying to save money, and also, you know, the primary concern is here is to give full rights to these employees in their role as employees. And I yield back to the gentlelady from Washington.

Chairman COMER. The time has expired. The time has expired. Does any other Member seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the question is now on the Randall Amendment Number 3.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

Mr. LYNCH. I request a recorded vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote has been ordered.

For what purpose does Ms. Ansari seek recognition?

Ms. ANSARI. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please report the amendment?

The CLERK. Amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, offered by Ms. Ansari of Arizona.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes to explain her amendment.

Ms. ANSARI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This amendment is to strike Section 90002, which would eliminate supplemental retirement payments for the majority of Federal employees who retire before age 62, even if they have served the American people for 25 years or more.

This entire reconciliation print is a brazen attack on Federal workers being used to fund billionaire tax cuts at the expense of working families. Retirement is already so out of reach for so many Americans, and one of the biggest reasons that people historically wanted to work for the Federal Government is because of the benefits. While the base pay may not be as high as the private sector, they knew that they were going to get the benefits that support their families, that they could retire 1 day, and that they had better protections against retaliation and wrongful termination. Now Republicans are bowing down to President Trump and Elon Musk, who want to completely dismantle and privatize the essential services that the Federal Government provides. We already struggle to recruit postal workers to get American families their mail on time. We have a nurse and doctor shortage at the VA. And yet, Republicans are making it even harder to recruit these essential employees, cutting key benefits, slashing pay by increasing pension contributions, making it easier to fire employees for any reason, and making them pay a fee to appeal wrongful terminations.

Making it less desirable to be a Federal employee means that the most talented, hardworking Americans will seek employment elsewhere. It means we will no longer be competitive to hire the high-quality talent we need to modernize our IT systems to make them run better for Americans who use them, something that we just had a subcommittee hearing about yesterday. Most importantly, gutting the Federal Government and chasing away that talent pool will result in a poor quality of services provided for our veterans, for our seniors, and for our families, all of this just to cut taxes for

the ultra-wealthy while still increasing the Federal debt. I will yield back to the Ranking Member.

Mr. LYNCH. I think the gentlelady. This amendment is well stated. The gentlelady from Arizona has identified an adverse result of the bill as it is currently written. Up to now, the law has been where an employee who is separating from Federal employment prior to the age of 62 and who is eligible for Social Security would have a supplemental payment to bridge that gap until they can actually collect Social Security at their full retirement age of 62. So, this leaves people in a position where they would either have to, you know, hang in there for a number of more years, you know, just for the fact that there would be a severe penalty from doing otherwise, and, you know, that is not an ideal situation. These are employees who are in government service for 20 to 25 years that are in this situation, and, you know, it is just one more aspect of this that we are making it less attractive to get the talent and the commitment that the gentlelady from Arizona is identifying.

So, with that, I will yield to any other Member on the Democratic side that wishes to speak. Otherwise, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. Any other Member seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the question is now on the Ansari amendment.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it. The amendment is not agreed to.

Mr. LYNCH. We would ask for a recorded vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote is ordered.

For what purpose does Ms. Simon seek recognition?

Ms. SIMON. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do have an amendment at the desk, Simon Amendment 1.

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please designate the amendment?

The CLERK. Amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, offered by Ms. Simon of California.

Ms. SIMON. Thank you.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes to explain her amendment.

Ms. SIMON. Thank you. I apologize for that, Mr. Chair. Thank you for the recognition. Today, I am offering a commonsense amendment to protect access to critical food assistance for not only my constituents, but families across this country. Simply put, this amendment would restrict the current Administration from reducing the budget of or provision of assistance for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP. Now, if the Trump Administration cuts SNAP, by any means, even at \$1, this provision being

considered by this Committee to cut Federal employee salaries, pensions, and labor protections would immediately expire. My amendment would force the Administration to choose between its attacks on essential food benefits and their ongoing attacks on our non-partisan Federal workforce.

Mr. Chair, I have mentioned in this Committee, some 29 years ago, when I was a single, yes, teen mom going to college, that I was a recipient of a small SNAP allotment of about \$26 a month. I consistently was at the grocery store every other week and I had to put food back because I could not afford to feed my daughter and I even with those benefits. So, I know the critical nature of these benefits. I am sitting before you today as somebody who not only finished college, finished graduate school, my daughter is an attorney and passed the bar on her first attempt because we had a social safety net that got us out of poverty for once and for all, and that is exactly what programs like SNAP are intended to do. No one deserves to be left behind because of an administration being hellbent on destroying our Federal Government and cutting our social safety nets.

Last week, I visited the Alameda County Food Bank where I heard directly from constituents about the devastating cuts, the potential cuts, the current cuts to Federal nutrition programs, like SNAP, and what that would mean for them. I heard time and time again on this visit about the unfortunate reality that so many folks face. They are one paycheck away from being in line at the food bank week after week. Federal workers, including members of the Federal Coast Guard operating in California, who have lost their paychecks, who have been fired, they, too, are in line at our food banks. These are the same Federal workers that the bill that we are considering today would hurt. This bill would make it harder for workers and their families to access food, to afford food, housing, and higher education by cutting their salaries and pension.

Mr. Chair, I have made a promise to my constituents, and all Americans, that I would do everything possible in my power to protect our social safety net. My amendment today is about the belief that food is a basic human right and that all human rights cannot just be stripped away with a stroke of a pen. This is a promise that no one will be hungry from losing their SNAP benefits. And any reduction in these benefits or services provided by SNAP would be the difference in being able to buy groceries, pay for rent and utilities, and afford healthcare that so many vulnerable Americans and families face every single day, including the working people that we are talking about today. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, 15 percent of the households in my district rely on SNAP benefits. In 2023, 44,000 households in California's 12 congressional District rely on SNAP benefits.

In closing, it is hard to close this conversation because so many folks around the country are relying on us in this moment to save the social safety net. Mr. Chair, voting for my amendment is an easy way to demonstrate to our constituents collectively, the full American public, that the critical benefits that the working poor rely on to put food on their table are not on the shopping block. As my colleagues from the other side of the aisle have already

pledged that we would not have cuts to SNAP. I urge my colleagues to vote yes on this amendment, and I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentlelady yields back. Does any Member seek recognition? Ms. Pressley. Use the mic, please.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Congresswoman Simon, I am so glad that you are here. I always say the people closest to the pain should be closest to the power. You have been closest to the pain, and we are so glad that you were here. You never forget the plot and the plot is the people. I appreciate the Congresswoman for introducing this amendment.

SNAP is a true lifeline and this is a matter of life and death. If Republicans have their way, this reconciliation bill will increase hunger and food insecurity. More than 42 million Americans participate in SNAP each month. This includes 16.9 million children, 4.5 million people with disabilities, and 1.2 million veterans. Over 1.1 million people in Massachusetts rely on SNAP. Let us talk about economic impact. Every \$1 in SNAP benefits generates \$1.50 in economic activity. SNAP dollars help to pay the wages of grocery store clerks, of truckers who deliver food, manufacturers who make food packaging, and the farmer who grows food. There is nothing efficient about making people hungrier and sicker. Is there any single Republican who is willing to speak out to make sure that children, people with disabilities, and veterans do not go hungry? Anyone?

Silence. This bill is a shame and a sham.

Chairman COMER. Any other Member seek recognition?

Mr. LYNCH. I do.

Chairman COMER. Mr. Lynch.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I join in support with the gentlelady from California's amendment. She has identified a real gap in this legislation that would leave some of our most vulnerable families exposed to hunger. In Massachusetts alone, we have 62,477 children that are eligible for Mass Health and living in households below the poverty line. We have got 29,000 seniors as well relying on Meals on Wheels and other food assistance programs. We have 1.1 million residents in Massachusetts relying on SNAP. So, the idea that we would remember, the overall goal here is for the Republicans to provide a tax cut for some of the richest people in America, and in order to do that, we are going to take the food out of these children's mouths, and we are going to cut Meals on Wheels to seniors who may have no other recourse and no other source of nourishment, it just shows the obscene nature of this measure. And I am just hoping that we have Members on the other side of the aisle who have communities where people are struggling like this.

And as the gentlelady from California said, this is a common sense. You know, food is pretty basic, and to think about the greatest country in the world and our priorities being skewed now to the point where, you know, we are cutting aid to veterans, where we are cutting Meals on Wheels. We are cutting the Head Start Program, too. A lot of these kids, their one meal of the day is when they go to school in the morning at Head Start, but we are cutting Head Start in this bill, so you are creating a crisis among these most vulnerable families, these children, these senior citizens. And

I think the gentlelady from California's amendment is well stated. It solves this on the matter of food. It carves this out so that we do not cause the greatest level of harm among the most vulnerable in our society.

You know, it has never been an American tradition to punch down at the most vulnerable people in our society, punching down at wounded veterans, punching down at seniors who are relying on Meals on Wheels, punching down at kids who are going to Head Start, taking the food away. I mean, is that really where America is today? Is that why people voted for Donald Trump? I do not think so. I do not think so. And I am hoping that in addition to the gentleman from Ohio, Mr. Turner, there will be other colleagues on the Republican side here who recognize the wrongfulness and the obscene nature of what this bill proposes.

Ms. SIMON. Ranking Member, will you yield?

Mr. LYNCH. I will yield to the gentlelady from California.

Ms. SIMON. Thank you, Ranking Member, and thank you Mr. Chair. I mean, for all of us, again, to summarize what this amendment is saying, do what you will. Do not cut SNAP. For foster parents throughout this Nation who are relying on SNAP, as they do literally the most beautiful work in taking in children who have been wards of the court. For young parents who are working two and three jobs and their rent is over the amount of what they are making. For the young college student who has two babies, who is desperately trying to get out of poverty, working two jobs and going to school at night. That was me. I know that life.

All we are saying, as a collective, if we vote yes on this amendment, do what you will. We do not want to have a hungrier America. It is plain and simple. For the poorest among us, for the poorest among us, the ones who work with their bodies and their children are suffering because we are saying, food banks, go to hell. Working people who have hungry children, we are not going to worry about you. All I am saying in this amendment is, please, with all that we have, do not touch the stomachs of poor children, and I yield back.

Chairman COMER. Any other Member seek recognition? Ms. Stansbury.

Ms. STANSBURY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to say thank you to the gentlelady from California for bringing this amendment forward and for highlighting the cruelty of what the GOP is trying to do right now with this entire reconciliation package. And I want to just point out once again, that in the name of balancing the budget, but in the reality of actually blowing a hole through the budget and the deficit, these guys are proposing to give \$7 trillion in tax breaks to billionaires, millionaires, and their corporate donors by taking away food from children. It is that simple, and it is not even that much money that is going to save them on the tax breaks for the rich, but it is literally going to take away food from children, literally.

Now, I have been back in my district, meeting with our food banks and people who are advocates for our families who are struggling. And, I think, like others on this Committee, I grew up in a household that struggled. I grew up in a household that when the worst did occur, when my mother did lose her job, we were on as-

sistance. And I would not be sitting here as a Congresswoman today if it was not for the grace of God and for those programs that are designed to catch people when they need it, to help people when they are their most vulnerable, to help moms who have kids, to help the elderly who are barely scratching by right now, to help people when they have disabilities, to help people when they end up with a medical emergency and there is nothing else to help them. That is what these programs exist for. That is why they are there.

Now, I know that my friends across the aisle like to allege that there is some sort of widespread waste, fraud and abuse happening, but let me just tell you this. If you have ever been on SNAP, you get an EBT card. This is like a credit card to go grocery shopping. Do you know how much money you get? Six bucks. You cannot even buy a single carton of eggs for 6 bucks right now. Donald Trump is on television literally saying right now that the price of eggs is down. That dude has probably never been grocery shopping in his life, more or less in the last week, and these guys want to steal food from children, and that is what this amendment would prevent.

Now, my food banks in New Mexico, the food banks that serve my population in New Mexico, are telling me that if these SNAP cuts go through this reconciliation package, there will not be enough funding or food in the supply chain to meet the need. It will be not only worse than it was at the height of the pandemic, it will be many times worse than it was during the pandemic. So, I want all of you guys to remember what it was like at the height of 2020 when, literally, our shelves were empty because there was a supply chain crisis, and the cost of food went through the roof, and people could not leave their homes, and there was this huge financial crisis. Literally, that is what we are hurdling toward right now, between the tariffs, the cost of living, between what is happening to the cost of food, and now they want to cut the most basic program that helps to stretch the gap for our most vulnerable people in our community.

If you think the lines that were long during the pandemic were difficult to see, if you cut these food assistance programs, that is what you are going to see all across America. How can we claim to be the wealthiest country on planet earth and we have got billionaires in the White House who are literally talking about taking money out of the mouths of children? It is not only unconscionable, it is disgusting. It is disgusting. How do we live in a society where we are even debating this? We are a country of plenty, and yet these guys want to give tax breaks to billionaires by starving children. It is ridiculous. In New Mexico, 1 in 5 children are on food assistance. That is who your bill is going to hurt, and we will vote no. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. Does any other Member seek recognition on the Simon amendment?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the question is now on the Simon amendment.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

Mr. LYNCH. A recorded vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote has been ordered. The vote will be postponed.

For what purpose does Mr. Bell seek recognition?

Mr. BELL. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please report the amendment?

The CLERK. Amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, offered by Mr. Bell of Missouri.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read. I reserve a point of order.

The gentleman from Missouri is recognized for 5 minutes to explain the amendment.

Mr. BELL. Thank you, Mr. Chair, Mr. Ranking Member. As a former public defender and elected prosecutor, I recognize when systems are being manipulated to suppress rights, and this provision sets a dangerous precedent. And so, I rise to strike this section because it represents not only an unjust financial burden on our Federal workforce, but also a direct attack on their access to due process.

And when we talk about households that are struggling, as my colleague so articulately pointed out, well, we were a level under that when I was growing up. We were just broke. Syrup sandwiches and fried bologna were like fine dining for us. And so, I think there is a disconnect when people think that things, such as a \$350 filing fee, is inconsequential when the average household income in my district is about \$50,000 to \$55,000. There are a lot of people that are making \$40 and \$30 and even less than that, and when you do the math, and you have lost your job, the math gets a lot easier. You are just broke. So, imposing a \$350 filing fee and adding new restrictions for appeals sends the wrong message to working-class Federal employees, and it tells them that their rights are negotiable.

The text makes clear that this fee would apply to appeals not involving prohibited personnel practices, including matters such as OPM suitability determinations, performance-based removals, terminations of probationary employees, and denial of reinstatement. So, to be clear, we are already witnessing the consequences of this Administration's workforce reduction agenda. An estimated 200,000 probationary employees have been terminated, and over 75,000 have been pressured into resigning. This is not cost cutting. It is an attack on the civil service. Federal employees deserve the right to challenge unjust actions without facing financial obstacles. By forcing workers to pay hundreds of dollars to defend their employment, we are telling them to choose between fighting a wrongful termination and paying for groceries or paying for the rent. These cuts should not come at the expense of our public servants, the very people who keep our government running.

Now more than ever, we must uphold and strengthen the protections available to our Federal workforce, which is why I have introduced this amendment to protect workers' rights, defend access to due process, and stand up for the values of fairness and justice. And I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this amendment and standing with Federal workers and with working-class families. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. Does any Member seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none——

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Chairman?

Chairman COMER. Mr. Lynch?

Mr. LYNCH. Yes. Mr. Chairman, in support of Mr. Bell's amendment, I would like to use my time on this amendment as a point of personal privilege.

Today, Oversight Democrats are issuing more than a hundred letters to the Trump Administration demanding documents and information related to the chaos, the corruption, and the cruelty that has defined its first 100 days. In that short period of time, the American people have already endured unprecedented threats to democracy and repeated actions undertaken by Donald Trump and Elon Musk to commercialize government and public service into a for-profit venture.

The Trump Administration and DOGE have unlawfully slashed funding of public programs, as we have discussed here today, they have illegally fired hardworking Federal workers, exposed Americans' private data to foreign actors, and have deliberately defied congressional oversight. This Administration has been unresponsive to Congress. It has been unaccountable to the public, defiant of Federal court decisions, and ignorant of the Constitution.

Oversight Committee Democrats are committed to holding the government of Donald Trump accountable and demanding transparency in government. Since January 20, Oversight Democrats have sent the Trump Administration nearly 200 investigative letters, including over 1,500 requests for information and documents. The vast majority of those letters have gone unanswered. That is why today we are escalating our investigation of the Trump Administration gross abuses of power, and we are asking for our letters to be entered into the record by unanimous consent.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield my additional time to Ms. Ansari, the gentlelady from Arizona.

Ms. ANSARI. Thank you, and I yield to Mr. Bell.

Mr. BELL. Again, I want to reiterate, we are asking Federal workers to pay for due process. And, again, as a former prosecutor, as a former judge, as a former public defender, that is not the values that our American system of government believes in. That is not how we do things in this country, in the greatest democracy on Earth. And so, everyone should have the right to say something is wrong and not have to pay for the access to be able to make that claim, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this amendment. I yield the remainder of my time back to the Ranking Member.

Mr. LYNCH. Ms. Pressley or Ms. Ansari, would you like additional time? Oh, we are good? All right. Thank you. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. Any other Member seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the question is now on the Bell amendment.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

Mr. LYNCH. I request a roll call vote, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. A roll call vote has been requested, and as previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

For what purpose does Ms. Pressley seek recognition?

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please report the amendment?

The CLERK. Amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, as offered by Ms. Pressley of Massachusetts.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read. I reserve a point of order.

The gentlewoman from Massachusetts is recognized for 5 minutes to explain her amendment.

Ms. PRESSLEY. This should be a simple unanimous addition to this bill. It directs the Government Accountability Office, the GAO, to study how this bill will impact people across our Federal workforce. It is about transparency. Specifically, we need data on who is impacted, how many women, how many older Americans, how many workers of color, veterans, workers with disabilities, and something I know my colleagues across the aisle will really appreciate, we need to know where they live, because, despite the myths, most Federal workers do not live in Washington, DC. They live in your districts. They live in your communities, doing essential work for your constituents.

My colleagues across the aisle argue that this bill is a good thing. They are advocating for a bill that cuts paychecks, eliminates earned benefits, and rips away healthcare from Federal employees and their families. Make no mistake, this legislation is how Donald Trump, Elon Musk, and Republicans plan to give away even more tax cuts to billionaires by making working-class folks fit the bill. Already, co-Presidents Trump and Musk have attacked, fired, and intimidated Federal employees, so it is no surprise that this plan continues that reckless assault—that is what it is, assault—targeting the public servants who safeguard the health, safety, and economic well-being of our communities.

For decades, we have fought to build a civil service that reflects the diversity of our country. Still, workers of color disproportionately serve public service roles that are physically demanding, lower paid, and often fewer pathways for advancement. Older

workers who have dedicated their lives to serving this country are now nearing retirement. They are counting on the pension rules and benefits that this bill aims to tear apart. Veterans, many of whom transition into civil service careers after military duty, they will see their protection stripped away under new so-called at-will employment schemes. So, yes, let me make it plain. This bill will hit our most vulnerable, our most dedicated, and our most essential workers, the hardest, all while making billionaires richer.

My amendment simply demands transparency. It ensures that if my colleagues across the aisle go down this path of taking away people's livelihoods, if Republicans want to strip away their healthcare and retirement security, we have the data, the data necessary to understand exactly who is being harmed. This is the bare minimum that people deserve from their representatives, so we understand exactly what we are doing and whom we are doing it to. I have thousands of constituents in my district, the Massachusetts 7, who are Federal workers and are seeing their lives completely upended. So, my Republican colleagues, think about the mail carriers in your hometown, think about the VA nurses caring for veterans in your district, think about the food inspectors ensuring that your constituents are bringing home safe groceries to their children. Why are you so desperate to ruin these people's lives when all they do is make yours better?

If you truly think this bill is good and fair for everyone, then you should have no fear about a GAO report confirming that. But if you cannot support even a simple report, if transparency is too much to ask, then maybe it is because you know exactly who you are hurting, and perhaps you are worried that yet another piece of damning evidence will show what people already see, that you are attacking workers who have dedicated their lives to this country all in the name of making more money for the wealthy and well-connected. But if I am wrong, vote for this amendment and prove it. I urge adoption, and yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentlelady yields back.

Does any other Member seek recognition on the Pressley amendment? Mr. Lynch?

Mr. LYNCH. I do. Mr. Chairman, I just want to support the gentlelady from Massachusetts' amendment. We are always striving to make fact-based decisions here in government, and this amendment provides data that will guide us, hopefully. And also, since there is a disagreement about the measure of pain that this is going to visit upon the American people, this is one way that we can have usable data. As the gentlelady has suggested, it will identify location. It will identify veterans, disabled, other classifications that will be actionable intelligence that we will be able to measure the negative impact on the families that we all represent. So, I want to thank her for her wise amendment, and I ask Members to support it as well, and I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentlemen yields back. Any other members seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the question is now on the Ms. Pressley Amendment Number 1.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

Ms. PRESSLEY. A recorded vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote has been requested.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Please vote.

Chairman COMER. The vote will be postponed.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you.

Chairman COMER. For what purpose does Ms. Pressley seek recognition?

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I have another amendment at the desk.

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please report the Ms. Pressley Amendment Number 2?

The CLERK. Amendment Number 2 to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, offered by Ms. Pressley of Massachusetts.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I recognize myself for a point of order. The gentlewoman from Massachusetts is recognized.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you. My amendment adds a basic measure of decency to a bill that has none. Under current law, when a Federal employee retires before they are eligible for Social Security, usually around age 60, after 20 or more years of service, they receive a monthly benefit to help bridge the gap until Social Security kicks in. It is called the FERS annuity supplement. It is not a bonus. It is not a handout. It is a bridge, something that workers earned, that helps career public servants, especially those in physically demanding or early retirement roles, make ends meet after dedicating their lives to this country. In my district, the Massachusetts' 7th, it quite literally keeps them out of poverty. Shamefully, on page 4 of this bill, they eliminate this benefit entirely for every Federal worker.

My amendment simply says, it is a carve-out, that veterans and employees with disabilities can keep this earned benefit. Every year, thousands of veterans transition into Federal jobs after completing their military service. They become postal workers, they become TSA agents, maintenance crews at national parks, clerks at VA hospitals—you are nodding your head, so you know that—inspectors at our ports. For many, this is a second career taken on later in life, again after military service, and they do not have 40 years to work in it before hitting retirement age. Without this benefit, they will face a cruel gap—retired, unable to work, but still too young to receive Social Security. We owe our veterans better than that after a lifetime of military and civil service. I am sure you agree.

In the same vein, Federal employees with disabilities often retire early under the same system their colleagues use, and for them, this benefit helps them to make ends meet. It pays the rent. It fills

a prescription. It keeps the lights on. Ripping this lifeline away from workers with disabilities is not only cruel, it is unnecessary. These are not the people driving up the deficit. They are doing what Republicans often accuse them of not doing, working, working when they are able to, and instead, they are getting punished for it. With this Administration, the cruelty is the point. This is just void of common sense and compassion, attacking, intimidating and purging Federal workers.

So, it is no surprise that co-Presidents Trump and Musk are turning to them to pay for more tax cuts to billionaires. We should be striking this section, hell, altogether. Instead, we should be putting forth a bill that affirms Federal workers as the essential workers they are. Instead, here we are, Republicans are gutting their benefits. All my amendment does is protect our veterans. Good patriots across the aisle, I am sure you want to join me in protecting our veterans and those with disabilities are most vulnerable from these reckless cuts. Now, if we cannot agree on that, then we are truly lost. We ask our veterans to serve, and they do. We ask our community members with disabilities to work if they can, and they do. When their service ends, the least we can do is honor it with dignity, and that is what my amendment ensures, and I urge passage of it. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. Do any other Members seek recognition? Mr. Lynch?

Mr. LYNCH. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I rise in support of the gentlelady's amendment. She has correctly pointed out that the way the bill is currently drafted, it penalizes military service.

So, we have many sons and daughters who serve in the military, and that length of service can be 10 or 15 years, in some cases, 20, even longer. But as the gentlelady has correctly pointed out, many, many, many of them end up in service to the Federal Government, either the post office or Defense Department. Just the entire spectrum of our Federal Government is full of those who have served the country in uniform.

What this amendment would do, would be to provide that bridge, so when someone completes their military service and goes on to serve the Federal Government, even though they may retire, choose to retire at an earlier date where they are not eligible for the full benefits that they might receive, this supplemental payment closes that gap that they would have otherwise received. It is a temporary bridge as well, until they reach age 62 when they would receive their full Social Security benefits. So, it is a good amendment, it provides fairness, and it removes the penalty that would otherwise be visited upon those who engage in military service on behalf of this country, and I yield back.

Chairman COMER. Does any other Member seek recognition on Ms. Pressley Amendment Number 2?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the question is now on the Ms. Pressley amendment No. 2.

All those in favor of supporting, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

Mr. LYNCH. I request a roll call.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote has been requested. For what purpose does Mr. Lynch seek recognition?

Mr. LYNCH. I believe I have an amendment at the desk, Number 3.

Chairman COMER. Will the clerk please designate the Lynch Amendment Number 3?

The CLERK. Amendment Number 3 to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 14, as offered by Mr. Lynch of Massachusetts.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

I reserve a point of order. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes to explain his amendment.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This amendment would serve to protect the retirement benefits of Federal workers who entered Federal service prior to the enactment of this bill and its implementation of a revised retirement formula.

Currently, the Office of Personnel Management calculates the retirement benefits of a Federal worker based on their average highest 3 consecutive years of base pay during their Federal service. In an attempt to unload the cost of proposed Trump tax plan on the backs of Federal employees, the underlying bill would unfairly revise the formula to base retirement benefits on the average highest 5 years of Federal workers' earnings. As reported by the American Federation of Government Employees and other Federal employee unions, this new formula will reduce the annual retirement received by virtually all Federal employees by at least thousands of dollars per year over the next decade. It will also severely impact Federal workers whose retirement benefits have already vested. I offer this amendment with the expectation that if my Republican colleagues cannot agree to strike this unfair formula from the bill in its entirety, we can at least hold harmless our current employees and find common ground in a commitment to preserve the retirement benefits that Federal employees have already earned.

According to the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association, the high-5 calculation would particularly reduce the value of earned retirement benefits for individuals on the brink of retirement. Such individuals have fulfilled their service to this country with the expectations that retirement would be based on the high-3. And now this Committee is aiming to roll back that promise, renege on that promise, and take back a portion of the compensation that was promised to them in exchange for their services already rendered. Moreover, these pending retirees have already relied on these benefits in planning for their retirement.

In the one hundred days since President Trump took office, this Administration is engaged in an unprecedented attack on the Federal civil service in the form of mass layoffs, forced resignations, hiring freezes, and replacement of nonpartisan Federal workers with political appointee loyalists. We simply cannot continue to tar-

get dedicated Federal employees who have already sacrificed earned pay and earned benefits and consideration of their commitment to public service. In fact, since 2011, Federal workers have contributed almost \$300 billion to deficit reduction in the form of mandatory frozen pay, increased pension contributions, and higher healthcare premiums, and still they are on the job providing critical services to the American people.

Members on both sides of the aisle also have long-serving staff who are affected by this legislation. Think about the best of your staff, especially those who have long service, staff who are approaching retirement and whose retirement benefits would be greatly reduced if this provision becomes law. Think about your own employees. And I urge my colleagues to support my amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. Does any other Member seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the question is now on the Lynch Amendment Number 3.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

Mr. LYNCH. I request a recorded vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote is ordered. As previously announced, further proceedings on the question will be postponed.

Before we recess, I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record the following statements of support from the following organizations. This is letters in support of our Oversight Committee Budget Reconciliation bill we will be voting on in a few hours: the Americans for Limited Government, the Taxpayers Protection Alliance, America First Policy Institute, Foundation for Government Accountability, and the National Taxpayers Union.

Without objection, so ordered.

Pursuant to the previous order, the Chair declares the Committee in recess, subject to the call of the Chair. We will reconvene at 3:30 p.m., and we should be able to get our votes in electronically before the House Floor vote. So, the Committee stands in recess until 3:30 p.m.

[Recess.]

Chairman COMER. The Committee will be in order.

The Committee will now resume consideration of the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to H.Con. Resolution 14.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Mr. Lynch from Massachusetts. This is the Lynch Amendment Number 1. Members will record your votes using the electronic voting system.

The clerk will now open the vote on the amendment to the amendment in the Committee [sic]. This is the Lynch Amendment 1.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change the vote?

[No response.]

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Chairman, how am I recorded? I cannot see that screen.

Chairman COMER. I cannot see it either.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Chairman, how am I recorded? I cannot really see that far. Can the clerk tell me how I am recorded?

Chairman COMER. Is Mr. Lynch recorded?

The CLERK. Mr. Lynch is recorded as voting aye.

Mr. LYNCH. OK. How is Mr. Frost recorded?

The CLERK. Mr. Frost is recorded as voting aye.

Mr. LYNCH. OK.

Chairman COMER. All right.

Mr. LYNCH. How about Ms. Stansbury, how is she recorded?

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chairman, they can see this on the board. Come on.

Chairman COMER. Yes, the clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20. The nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the Perry, from Pennsylvania, amendment to Reconciliation Committee Print ANS. Members will record their vote using the electronic voting system.

The clerk will now open the vote on the amendment of the Committee Print. The Chairman votes no.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 16. The nays are 27.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute, offered by Mr. Mfume from Maryland. Members will record the votes using electronic voting system.

The clerk will now open the vote on the amendment to the amendment of the Committee Print by Mr. Mfume.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20. The nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed the amendment to the amendment in the nature of the substitute offered by Mr. Mfume from Maryland. This will be the Mfume Amendment 2. Members will record their votes using the electronic voting system.

The clerk will now open the vote.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20. The nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of substitute offered by Mr. Lynch. This will be the Lynch amendment 2. Members will record the votes using electronic voting system on the Lynch amendment 2. Clerk, please open the vote.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report the vote total. Clerk report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20, the nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of substitute, offered by Ms. Stansbury from New Mexico. This will be the Stansbury Amendment 1. Members will record their votes using electronic voting system on Stansbury Amendment 1.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20, the nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of substitute offered by Ms. Stansbury from New Mexico. Members will record the vote using electronic voting system. This is on the Stansbury Amendment 2.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20, the nays are 23.

Chairman CLERK. The noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Mr. Frost from Florida. Members will record the votes using electronic voting system on the Frost amendment.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20, the nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of substitute offered by Mr. Casar. Members will record the votes using the electronic voting system on the Casar Amendment Number 3.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20, the nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of substitute offered by Mr. Casar

from Texas. Members will record their votes using the electronic voting system on the Casar Amendment Number 2.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20. The nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute, offered by Mr. Casar from Texas. Members will record their votes using the electronic voting system on the Casar Amendment Number 4.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20. The nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The nays have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Ms. Lee from Pennsylvania. Members will record their vote using the electronic voting system. This is on the Lee Amendment Number 1.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all the Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20. The nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it, the amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Ms. Lee from Pennsylvania. Members will record their vote using the electronic voting system on the Lee Amendment Number 2.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20. The nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previous postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Ms. Lee from Pennsylvania. Members will record their vote using the electronic voting system on the Lee Amendment Number 3.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20. The nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it. The amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Ms. Lee from Pennsylvania. Members will record their vote using the electronic voting system. This is on the Lee Amendment Number 4.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20. The nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it. The amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute, offered by Mr. Garcia from California. Members will record their votes using electronic voting system on the Garcia amendment.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, will the clerk report the vote total?

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20. The nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it. The amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Mr. Subramanyam. Members will record the vote using the electronic voting system. The Subramanyam amendment.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20. The nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The nays have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Ms. Randall. Members will record their votes using an electronic voting system. The clerk will now open the vote on the Randall Amendment Number 1.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will please close the vote and report to vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20. The nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The nays have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Ms. Randall. Members will record their vote using the electronic voting system on the Randall Amendment Number 2.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will please close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20. The nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it. The amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Ms. Ran-

dall. Members will record the vote using the electronic voting system. This is the Randall Amendment Number 3.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20. The nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The nays have it. The amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Ms. Ansari from Arizona. The Members will record their vote using electronic voting system on the Ansari amendment.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20. The nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it. The amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of substitute offered by Ms. Simon. Members will record their vote using the electronic voting system on the Simon amendment.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20. The nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it. The amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Mr. Bell from Missouri. Members will record their vote using the electronic voting system on the Bell amendment.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20. The nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it. The amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Ms. Pressley from Massachusetts. Members will record their vote on the electronic voting system on the Pressley Amendment Number 1.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20. The nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Ms. Pressley from Massachusetts. Members will record their vote using the electronic voting system. This is on the Pressley Amendment Number 2.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members voted who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report to vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20, the nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it, and the amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the previously postponed amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Mr. Lynch from Massachusetts. Members will record their vote using the electronic voting system. This is on the Lynch Amendment Number 3.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report the tally.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 20, the nays are 23.

Chairman COMER. The noes have it. The amendment is not agreed to.

The question is now on the amendment in the nature of a substitute to Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to House Resolution 14, as amended.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, no.

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the ayes have it. The amendment in the nature of a substitute to Fiscal Year 2025 Budget reconciliation print is agreed to.

Dr. FOXX. Mr. Chairman?

Chairman COMER. Dr. Foxx. Yes. The Chair recognizes Dr. Foxx.

Dr. FOXX. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move the Committee to now transmit the recommendations of this Committee and all appropriate accompanying material, including Minority, additional, supplemental, or dissenting views to the House Committee on the Budget in order to comply with the reconciliation directive included in Section 2001 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for Fiscal Year 2025, H. Con. Res. 14, and consistent with Section 310 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974.

Chairman COMER. The motion has been made. The question is on transmitting the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation pursuant to the House Budget Committee. Members will record their votes using the electronic voting system.

The clerk will now open the vote on transmitting the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Reconciliation Committee Print providing for reconciliation.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members been recorded who wish to be recorded? Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 22. The nays are 21.

Chairman COMER. The ayes have it, and the bill is ordered transmitted to the House Budget Committee.

Without objection, the motion to reconsider is laid on the table.

And last, pursuant to notice, I now call up the following en bloc postal naming bills which were distributed in advance of this markup: H.R. 323, 397, 1372, and 1830.

Without objection, the bills are considered read.

If any Member would like to speak on any of the measures, they may do so now. The Chair recognizes Mr. Perry.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, thank you for the time. I am just going to say I am going to call for a recorded vote, vote no, and the reason for that is I oppose H.R. 397. I do not think we should name a post office or any Federal building after a person who was kicked out of his ministers conference for encouraging violence and bloodshed. So, I will be voting no on H.R. 397, for that reason.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote is ordered. Members will record their votes using the electronic voting system.

The clerk will now open the vote on favorably reporting the en bloc postal naming package.

Mr. LYNCH. Point of clarification.

Chairman COMER. OK. What is the question?

Mr. CLOUD. We do not know what it is.

Chairman COMER. This is the en block postal naming bills. We were going to——

Ms. STANSBURY. Right, but what is the objection?

Chairman COMER. He objected to 397, but this is the en bloc. We are voting on everything. He objected because of 397, so he is voting against all the postal naming bills. Am I correct on that?

This is an en bloc, so Republican and Democrat bills.

Mr. CLOUD. Mr. Chairman, can the question be divided?

Chairman COMER. Do you want to——

Mr. CLOUD. I would like to move to divide the question.

Chairman COMER. Mr. Perry, would you mind—is everyone OK if Mr. Perry explains his opposition? Is that OK?

Mr. PERRY. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would rather not vote no on all of them. Because they are en bloc'd, I have little choice. So, I would rather them not be en bloc'd, so I can vote no on H.R. 397 because I do not think it is appropriate to name a Federal post office after an individual who was kicked out of his ministers conference for encouraging violence and bloodshed.

Ms. GREENE. I second that, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. PERRY. And with that, I yield.

Chairman COMER. All right. The vote is up.

Mr. CASAR. Point of order.

Chairman COMER. State your point.

Mr. CASAR. It is just a question, aren't we already voting on this?

Chairman COMER. That is true. The vote has been open. This was a courtesy for Ms. Stansbury and Mr. Perry. I try to make everybody happy in this Committee. Isn't everybody happy? Everybody happy? Everybody looks happy.

Has everyone voted who wishes to vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does anyone wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote tally and report the tally.

The CLERK. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the ayes are 23, the nays are 15, with 4 voting present.

Chairman COMER. The ayes have it. The package is ordered favorably reported. Without objection, the motion to reconsider is laid on the table.

Pursuant to House Rule XI, Clause 2, I ask that Committee Members have the right to file with the clerk of the Committee supplemental, additional, Minority, and dissenting views, without objection.

Additionally, the staff is authorized to make necessary technical and conforming changes to the Committee Print, subject to the approval of the Minority. Without objection, so ordered.

If there is no further business before the Committee, without objection, the Committee stands adjourned.
[Whereupon, at 4:08 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

