footsteps of the losing candidate for Governor 2 years before. She lost by over 50,000 votes and has never even bothered to try to prove voting irregularities on that scale.

Just ask Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, who got into hot water from Trump supporters and was briefly celebrated by the Democrats for defending the integrity of the Georgia election. He will be the first to tell you that attacks on Georgia's election system started not with Trump but with Democrats.

Democrats decided to take their partisan election attack nationwide. This is what led to H.R. 1, the so-called by Speaker PELOSI For the People Act. The title alone reveals it as a propaganda bill. They didn't take the time to draft something from scratch since the purpose was partisan messaging, not enacting thoughtful reform of our election laws. They just cobbled together every election mandate bill introduced by a Democrat in recent years into one giant package, taking little care to make sure it all made sense together and without working with local election officials to see if it was even a practical approach.

Democrats have now reframed the same bill in a response to what they call the big lie, that the 2020 election was illegitimate, but it was actually written in 2019 to double down on Democrats' own big lie questioning the legitimacy of the various elections they lost in 2018.

America's elections are free and fair. That is true in Iowa, in Georgia, and all 50 States. It was true in 2018 and in 2020, and I am confident it will be true in 2022.

Foreign adversaries like Russia and China cast doubt on the soundness of our democratic system both to weaken it from within and to justify their own repressive regimes. Influence efforts to do just that have been part of the KGB playbook for decades. But foreign agents can't hold a candle to what we Americans are doing to ourselves. Casting doubt on elections may be good politics in the short run, but it does real damage in the long run. Let's all agree to stop this sort of peddling of doubts about the elections.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

JOBS

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, I hope that you had a marvelous Mother's Day. I enjoyed so much being back in Tennessee, and over the past week, I really had the pleasure of hearing from so many Tennesseans who are just celebrating having reopened businesses and music venues and public spaces in our communities.

There was a lot of happiness across our State as I was there. Everywhere you looked, you could see evidence that people are ready to get back to work, and they want to get back to life as normal.

There is also a lot of evidence that local businesses are ready to get back to normal. You cannot walk 10 feet in Knoxville, TN, for example, without running into a ''help wanted'' sign. Normally, this would be an indicator of a successful economic comeback, but here is the problem: Those signs just are not working, not for retail or restaurants or even for the industrial sector with small business manufacturing. Some businesses are getting so desperate for help that they are offering signing bonuses worth hundreds of dollars to anyone willing and able to come back to work.

All year, we have used a particular catchphrase to encourage people to get their vaccinations. We have said that if we could only get shots in arms, then we could get back to normal. Well, as it turns out, that was step 1. We are getting the shots in arms. People are getting vaccinated. Now it is time for step 2, and that is getting people back to work, getting them to fill these jobs.

I have said time and again and I will say it again: The best economic stimulus there is, the very best economic stimulus there is, is a job. It is a job. This holds true not just for those pulling in a paycheck but for the businesses that are hiring.

My Democratic colleagues—many of them—disagree with me on this point, but I firmly believe the best economic stimulus is a job. For months, some have refused to discuss an end to the various emergency relief programs we all agreed were necessary to help workers and businesses survive the lockdowns. But they were never meant to be permanent programs; they were there for a time of specific need.

I think, if some of my colleagues took the time to speak to the owners whose businesses are short on labor, they would hear the same story over and over again. Their pool of potential employees was drained dry, at least in part by the unemployment insurance plus-up that we initiated last year. Because of the way that program was designed and because my colleagues on the other side of the aisle rejected our offers to amend it, potential employees are drawing in more in unemployment than they would make at some jobs.

Now, some of my colleagues across the aisle dispute the notion that this imbalance has led to a labor shortage. They claim that if there are people staying home and collecting unemployment rather than taking their old job back, or maybe a new job, that those examples are anecdotal. But to that point, I would ask: How many anecdotes does it take to create a trend?

In Tennessee, there are at least a quarter of a million jobs available, but as of last week, we still have about 49,000 people receiving the $300 plus-up. This means that there are five jobs—five—five jobs available for every single one of those 49,000 people.

I want to make it clear that these business owners have no reason to lie about the trouble they are having finding help. Their survival depends on their ability to hire a team of employees. They gain nothing by poisoning the well with false accusations. Anyone who has ever run a business knows that.

They also know it is a difficult call for these potential employees to make, even when signing bonuses and higher wages are on the table, but therein lies the disconnect. While businesses are incentivized to do all they can to attract workers, the Federal Government has incentivized workers to hold out as long as they can before taking the leap into a new job. It is not their fault, but it is the reality that Congress created.

What we are seeing now isn't economic stimulus. I would offer that it is an economic stalemate. And if we don't break the ties that bind recovery to the success or failure of a government program, we will suffer long-term economic consequences.

As I said, some of my Democratic colleagues fundamentally disagree with that approach. They have made that disagreement clear to the tune of $6 trillion worth of spending that would be like nothing else that we have ever seen and making it a permanent part of our economic landscape.

They gave us a COVID relief package that had almost nothing to do with fighting the pandemic, an infrastructure proposal that dedicates 60 percent—60 percent of its total pricetag to job-killing proposals like the Green New Deal fantasies and, most recently, a supposedly pro-family proposal that, if implemented, will in fact replace the stability of the nuclear family with a lifelong tether to the welfare state.

Talk about never letting a crisis go to waste. This isn't compassion, in my opinion, and it isn't recovery. This is a power grab. They took the majority, put pen to paper, and produced a wish list. They have wanted to check off items from that wish list since 2010. So their list is long.

This version of economic stimulus, which, in reality, is just a destructive cycle of spending and dependency and taxation and inflation, will require more than just a general buy-in from the American people. They are going to have to persuade people to cede authority, to cede authority over their lives, their families, their businesses, their jobs, their employment—cede that authority to the Federal Government.

Now, if this isn't true, if this isn't their goal, let the Democrats dispute it. Let them come to the table and listen to what these business owners are telling us. Let them help figure out a way to offer a light at the end of the tunnel to the unemployed and underemployed instead of keeping them tangled in a safety net that was neither designated nor intended to be permanent.

We still have a long way to go before we can declare victory over the COVID–19 pandemic. But what my colleagues on the other side of the aisle refuse to acknowledge is that we will never make it across the finish line if we don't allow the American people to

hope for that victory. We need to allow them to hope that last month's terrible jobs report was just an anomaly. I certainly hope it was.

And most importantly, we need to allow them to remember that a little over a year ago, we didn't have to rely on emergency supplements and direct payments from the government to survive. We had the most robust economy we had in decades and decades. Unemployment numbers were at record lows. Wage gains were at record highs.

So we have been there before. We can and we will recover. But encouraging total reliance on the government is not going to be what gets us there, especially when so many businesses in this country are trying to hire workers, and workers are not taking the jobs.

I yield floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 69, Andrea Joan Palm, of Wisconsin, to be Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services.

Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Michael F. Bennet, Jack Reed, Jeanne Shaheen, Patrick J. Leahy, Martin Heinrich, Catherine Cortez Masto, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Christopher Murphy, Christopher A. Coons, Tammy Baldwin, Tammy Duckworth, Chris Van Hollen, Tim Kaine, Thomas R. Carper, Amy Klobuchar, Margaret Wood Hassan.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Andrea Joan Palm, of Wisconsin, to be Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) and the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Pennslyvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 62, nays 35, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 179 Ex.]

YEAS—62

Baldwin	Casey	Grassley
Bennet	Collins	Hassan
Blumenthal	Coons	Hickenlooper
Blunt	Cornyn	Hirono
Booker	Cortez Masto	Hyde-Smith
Brown	Crapo	Kaine
Burr	Duckworth	Kelly
Cantwell	Durbin	King
Capito	Feinstein	Klobuchar
Cardin	Gillibrand	Leahy
Carper	Graham	Luján
Manchin	Reed	Stabenow
Markey	Romney	Sullivan
Menendez	Rosen	Tester
Merkley	Rounds	Van Hollen
Murkowski	Sanders	Warner
Murphy	Schatz	Warnock
Ossoff	Schumer	Warren
Padilla	Shaheen	Whitehouse
Peters	Sinema	Wyden
Portman	Smith	

NAYS—35

Barrasso	Hawley	Risch
Blackburn	Hoeven	Rubio
Boozman	Inhofe	Sasse
Braun	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Shelby
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Cruz	Lummis	Tillis
Daines	Marshall	Tuberville
Ernst	McConnell	Wicker
Fischer	Moran	Young
Hagerty	Paul	

NOT VOTING—3

Heinrich	Murray	Toomey

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). On this vote, the yeas are 62, the nays are 35.

The motion is agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

GREEN JOBS PLAN

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to discuss what I have seen happen now over the last 100 days of the Biden administration, and that is President Biden seems to be doubling down on some of the failures of the Obama administration.

Last week, as the ranking member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I released a report, and it is called ''Solyndra Syndrome and the Green Stimulus Delusion.'' Solyndra syndrome.

I tell you, I think it is an important thing to highlight because this 20-page report really is an in-depth look at the failed green energy policies under the Obama administration. Now what we are seeing is President Biden is determined, in my opinion, to repeat them, on a much larger scale.

In 2009, under the direction of President Obama, Democrats passed a partisan stimulus spending bill. The legislation included $90 billion for green job training, for green energy loans, and for high-speed rail. It also included about $3 billion for a program more commonly referred to now as ''Cash for Clunkers.''

The goal was to produce millions of green energy jobs. They wanted to do it by investing taxpayer dollars in emerging green energy companies and also subsidizing new vehicles.

So what did American taxpayers get for all of this money? What did they get as a return on this hefty investment? Well, they didn't get the promised jobs. They got boondoggles. Billions of taxpayer dollars wound up wasted on green tech companies through loans or grants. Several of the companies then failed.

The most famous of these was, of course, Solyndra. This was a solar panel company with many personal ties to the administration. It was located in California and received over $500 million in government-backed loans. Vice President Biden, at the time Vice President, was actually the one who announced that Solyndra would receive hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars.

Well, not too long after that, headlines across the Nation told the story of what happened next. In September of 2011, the company failed miserably. More than 1,000 workers lost their jobs. Almost all of the 535 million taxpayer dollars were lost.

The leadership of Solyndra lied about the company's value and what they could produce. It also turns out they were big political donors to the Obama-Biden campaign and the Democrats.

While the Obama-Biden donors got millions of grant money, taxpayers back then were left holding the bag. It was a terrible green gamble, and it had gone terribly wrong.

It wasn't the only one of these projects. Other companies like A123 Systems, Beacon Power, Ener1, Fisker Automotive all received big government-backed loans, and they all went bankrupt.

The waste didn't stop at loans for private companies. No, the Obama administration gave a $3.5 billion grant to California for a high-speed rail project. This was California's planned bullet train, and it was supposed to go from Los Angeles to San Francisco.

Let's fast forward 10 years and see where we are with that bullet train. After skyrocketing project costs, the Governor of California has recently thrown in the towel. Only a fraction of the original project is going to be completed, and delays continue to be announced.

So you might ask: Well, why are they completing a small fraction of this railroad, this high-speed bullet train that was supposed to go from Los Angeles to San Francisco? Well, by completing a small part of the original project, California can avoid having to pay back the taxpayers of the Nation—more wasted money.

Americans clearly remember Cash for Clunkers. What a program that was. It gave subsidies to folks for the purchase of a new greener vehicle as a way to stimulate auto sales and auto industry jobs. The big problem was it didn't work. One analysis found that the Cash for Clunkers Program created one job for every $1.4 million spent. That is quite a lot of money for a single job. The program itself was a clunker, and it spent way too much taxpayer cash.

The list goes on and on, as I have outlined in this report. The Obama administration frittered away billions of taxpayer dollars. They chose people close to the administration to receive the money. The economy remained sluggish, and the taxpayers got fleeced.

There actually was one bright economic spot during the great recession, and, of course, I will tell you that was the oil and gas sector in this country.