act from the Feds. If Democrats at the local, State, and Federal levels want fewer parents—concerned parents—showing up at school board meetings, the solution is to stop indoctrinating the kids with crazy messages on the taxpayers' dime, not trying to use Federal law enforcement to frighten families out of their First Amendment rights.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Madam President, now on a totally different matter, in recent years, Washington Democrats have shown an alarming willingness to invent crises to justify radical ideas. They have tried to vilify our independent judiciary and exhume the concept of court-packing from the ash heap of history. They have tried to sell a 50–State Federal takeover of election laws by fearmongering about mainstream and reasonable State decisions. When it came to an actual crisis, a once-in-a-century pandemic, Democrats didn't even try to conceal their intentions. As the House majority whip put it back in March of 2020, it was all ''a tremendous opportunity to restructure things to fit our vision.''

With unified control of government, they bragged this spring about passing the most progressive legislation in American history. This first spending spree expanded Federal supplements to unemployment insurance so massively that the best choice for huge numbers of skilled American workers was simply to stay home—stay home. The whole thing was an avalanche of cash that stunted our economic recovery and, of course, accelerated inflation.

Now Washington Democrats are behind closed doors again, assembling an even bigger reckless taxing-and-spending spree. It is meant to be a Trojan horse for permanent socialism—conclusive proof that the radical left is calling the shots in today's Democratic Party. I have talked about the laundry list of leftwing boondoggles that our colleagues are packing into this plan. At the heart of it all is one simple and dangerous assumption: that American families ought to be more reliant on the Federal Government.

Democrats' plans would chase more Americans off of the private health insurance plans they chose and onto government rolls. They would shred a decades-old consensus about the importance of work and massively expand cash grants to families without any employment requirements—without any employment requirements. They want to reinvent welfare without welfare reform. There is giveaway after giveaway that isn't even means tested. Their plans have literally proposed to have taxpayers fund free school lunch for the kids of millionaires and billionaires—no means testing whatsoever. None.

In addition, Washington Democrats want to insert themselves into the middle of the most personal family decisions about childcare and family structure, redistributing huge amounts of money only to households that arrange their lives the way Democrats want.

In area after area, Democrats want to implement far-left policies that would make the economy worse for working families and then clumsily try to make it up to citizens with socialism that is disconnected from work. This is a frontal assault on the nature of employment and work itself in American life.

They are out to, as one economist put it, ''fundamentally change the relationship between the state and its citizens.'' Even the New York Times last month called what Democrats are hammering out ''a cradle-to-grave reweaving'' of the government's role. Lower wages. Fewer jobs. At least American workers will have cradle-to-grave socialism.

It is one vision for the future, all right, but it is not one that Americans want, and it is one that Senate Republicans will fight every step of the way.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, $28 trillion, $9,700 per person. It is common for Members of this Senate to stand on the Senate floor and debate the pricetag of spending bills and legislation that costs millions, billions, and even trillions of dollars. These numbers are so large that for many people—perhaps even for us—it is incomprehensible and unrelatable.

Today, I would like to take a moment to talk about dollars and cents. In Kansas, the current average price for a gallon of gas is $3.09. Last year, the average cost per gallon of gas in Kansas was $1.93. This means filling up a 15-gallon tank will cost you an extra $17 every time you fill up your car at the pump. If you fill up your vehicle once a week, that is an additional $904 you spent on gas this year as opposed to just last year.

Electricity prices are up 5.2 percent this year. The average monthly electric bill for a residence in Kansas last year was $113.52. A 5-percent increase is an additional $68 per family.

This winter is going to be expensive for American families, particularly in the Midwest, as households are expected to see their heating bills jump as much as 54 percent compared to last winter, making it the most expensive winter since 2008.

Thanks to inflation, the price of eggs is up 9.9 percent. A used car is going to be about 24 percent more expensive. Chicken has a 7.2-percent increase in cost, in price.

In fact, these realities are being reflected by media across the country.

Newsweek's headline: ''Your Thanksgiving Turkey Could Be the Most Expensive Ever.''

MSNBC: ''Thanksgiving is now less than a month away and it's shaping up to be the most expensive meal in the history of the holiday.''

CBS News: ''On the table for Thanksgiving this year? Higher food prices.''

NBC News: ''This Thanksgiving, be prepared to fork over more dough for your feast.''

And The New York Times: ''This Year's Thanksgiving Feast Will Wallop the Wallet.''

This is horrible news for almost every Kansan and for every American, and it is especially damaging to those who are already struggling to pay the bills because their hard-earned dollars just don't go far enough now.

An extra $17 at the gas pump or $68 on an electric bill and an extra 50 cents here or there is quickly adding up, for middle-class and low-income families, to be a major challenge.

These dollars add up to tough decisions, like: Will we be able to make our mortgage payment this month? Do we forgo a Thanksgiving meal this year so we can keep the heat on? Can we afford to make the drive across the country to see the grandparents for the holidays?

The current trajectory for inflation doesn't look good either. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said on Sunday that the United States hasn't experienced the recent inflation levels in a ''long time'' and expects higher inflation to continue into 2022.

Part of inflation—a significant portion of inflation is caused by government spending, and the Democrats' out-of-control spending and policies have sped up the rate of inflation, creating these higher prices for families.

In particular, President Biden's effort to restrain American oil and gas production—this one is not about spending, but it is about policy. President Biden's efforts to restrain American oil and gas production while, oddly, hypocritically, strangely, appealing to OPEC to increase the global oil supply in the face of high gas prices at home has resulted in higher energy prices, which could drive inflation even higher in the months to come.

It is time for Congress to turn off the spending spigot. The Democrats' nearly $2 trillion spending package that passed at the beginning of this session, in January, did nothing to help with our labor shortage or to improve the supply chain. It, instead, accelerated inflation around the country. We have been slow to turn that spigot off, and we have exacerbated it since the arrival of a Democrat majority and President Biden in the White House.

The Democrats are awfully busy trying to fill their campaign promises by passing their tax-and-spending spree, and they are too busy to worry about the damage they are causing American families. More spending will only exacerbate our current inflationary circumstances, and the path that the