

*CBS Mornings*

10/01/25

8:00:54 a.m.

7 minutes and 20 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: JD Vance on Gov't Shutdown & Impact on Americans]

TONY DOKOUPIL: We're going to begin this hour with the government shutdown that began at midnight. The two sides at the Capitol are sharply divided and we have the person to talk about it joined by Vice President JD Vance from the Vice President's mansion. Mr. Vice President, thank you for joining this morning. I know it's a busy day. I want to start with what's happening now knowing that we're going to talk about how we got here and how we got out of it, but right now the President has been talking about the possibility of mass layoffs. Is that an expansion or a continuation of what's already happening, or should Americans be bracing for something new?

VICE PRESIDENT JD VANCE: Well, good morning, Tony. Thanks for having me. First of all, why are we in this position? We're in this position because Senate Democrats decided they were going to shut down the government despite the fact the House voted to keep the government open. And I have to be honest, Tony, it's actually not all Senate Democrats. To their great credit, a number of moderate Democrats voted with Republicans to keep the government open last night. Unfortunately, it was one faction of one branch of government — the far-left faction of Senate Democrats — who decided to shut down the people's government. And to your point about what will happen now, there are critical essential services that the people rely on that are going to suffer because of this. There are people who benefit from low-income food programs, families like mine who benefitted from those programs, are going to see those programs disappear. There are people, of course, who are flying today, should know if their flight is delayed, I hope it's not, but it may have something to do with the fact there are TSA agents and air traffic controllers are no longer getting paid. Our military is no longer getting paid. There are critical services the Democrats have taken hostage because they have a policy disagreement that they are open to work with us on, but they shouldn't be shutting the government down because of that policy disagreement. Now, you asked about mass layoffs. We don't want to lay anybody off, but what we do want to do is make sure that as much of the essential services of government remain functional as possible. We were sort of dealt this hand by that faction of Senate Democrats who shut down the government. We're going to have to deal with it. We're going to have to make sure as much of the people's government remains open or functional as possible. That's what we're going to do, but there's going to be some pain, and there's necessarily going to be some pain because Senate Democrats refused to reopen the government. We hope they'll change their minds in the days to come.

DOKOUPIL: So, Mr. Vice President, let's talk about how to get out of this by going right to that policy difference. It's about subsidies supporting the Affordable Care Act. Democrats want to extend those subsidies. Republicans don't. If those subsidies are not extended, people will see spikes in their health care costs. Some people will opt not to have insurance as a result. What do you want to have happen around those subsidies? Do you support extending them as a general matter?

VANCE: So two very important points. First of all, those subsidies, while many of them are important, Tony, they don't expire until next year, so this idea you have to shut down the government in early October over subsidies that don't expire for many months is preposterous. Nobody buys it, not even many Senate Democrats who voted with us last night to reopen the government. The second point I want to make, if you look at the Democrats' initial demands, the reason this process really fell off the ramps from the very beginning, they came to us saying that they wanted to give massive amount of taxpayer benefits to illegal aliens. That's ridiculous. And you're certainly not going to shut down the government because we refuse to give taxpayer-funded health care to illegal aliens.

DOKOUPIL: Mr. Vice President —

VANCE: But that's the situation we now find ourselves in now. If Senate Democrats or House Democrats or anybody else wants to come to the Oval Office — look, I'll go down to the Capitol right to talk about how to enhance subsidy support for people's health care. We want to have that conversation and, frankly, there's a lot of common of agreement on that. What you don't do is hold the economy hostage and shut down the government because we're not giving you everything that you want.

DOKOUPIL: — Mr. Vice President —

VANCE: You go back to President Obama, you go back to George W. Bush, everybody agreed you don't shut down over policy disagreements. Unfortunately, Senate Democrats don't think that way today.

DOKOUPIL: — Mr. Vice President, I — you know, both parties have shut down the government before because of policy disagreements. They often don't get what they want. I have two quick follow-ups. First there on the Affordable Care Act subsidies, people do need to make decisions now. The renewal notices go out on November 1, so now is the time to think about whether you can afford health care going forward. Two, on this notion Democrats want to give a bunch of taxpayer dollars to illegal aliens, is that a reference to health care? Because when I look at it, you know, illegal aliens are not currently eligible for the Affordable Care Act as is, so what are you referring to there?

VANCE: I appreciate the opportunity to explain that, Tony. There's a lot of cross talk here, so here is what I mean. If you go back to the Biden era, they did two separate things. First of all, they encouraged illegal aliens and funded illegal aliens to go to American hospitals for health care. That was number one. Number two, they gave a massive, what's called parole, they effectively waived an amnesty wand and gave health care benefits to many illegally in the country without documentation, without proper authorization. We undid both of those Biden-era programs to cut off that health care funding to illegal aliens. The Democrats want to reinstitute those policies and they're saying that unless you reinstitute those policies that give benefits to illegal aliens, we want to shut down the government. We, of course, think that's preposterous and I think, frankly, some Senate Democrats obviously agree with us on that point. Now, you also asked about in the past, of course, people have shut down the government —

DOKOUPIL: Well, Mr. Vice President —

VANCE: — what we've learned from many cycles of government shutdowns is they never work. They cause a lot of damage. We should take that wisdom, open up the government, and then talk about how to ensure people have access to health care. We want that, Tony. We want people to have access to health care. We just don't want to shut down the government as hostage-taking tactic which is what we've done because of the Senate Democrats and the situation they've put us in.

DOKOUPIL: So, Mr. Vice President, what is your advice for more than 20 million Americans who rely on subsidies to afford health insurance?

VANCE: Well, my advice to them is that they should call their congressman. They should call their senator and, first of all, encourage them to reopen the government and, second of all, make their voices heard because we want them to have access to health care as much as anybody. You mentioned that a lot of those notices will go out on November 1. We've been working with insurance companies to ensure we have the time necessary to get the right reforms in place so that people's health care premiums don't skyrocket. Of course, we inherited this really bad health care system from the last days of the Biden administration. We want to fix it. We just don't want to shut down the government while we're fixing it. Why can't we open up the government, fix the health care program and actually work together for a change? You don't take the economy hostage because you want a particular health care policy especially when the white house is offering to work with Senate Democrats to fix that policy, so let's fix it. Let's reopen the government. Let's do something for the American people and not take the economy hostage by shutting down the government. We're already in this —

DOKOUPIL: Mr. Vice President —

VANCE: — each day, it's going to get worse, so let's stop it.

DOKOUPIL: — alright. I appreciate your time, Mr. Vice President. There's other issues we did want to get to, but we ran out of time. I hope you'll come back soon.

VANCE: Thanks, Tony. Take care.

DOKOUPIL: Alright, I appreciate it.