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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RICHARD J. DURBIN, a Senator from the State of Illinois.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, our ever-present help in trouble, as our Nation stumbles toward a seemingly unavoidable government shutdown, keep our lawmakers from sowing to the wind, thereby risking reaping the whirlwind. May they remember that all that is necessary for unintended catastrophic consequences is for good people to do nothing. Lord, lead them away from the unfortunate dialectic of us versus them, as they strive to unite for the common good of this land we love. Let them not be content to wait and see what will happen but give them the determination to make the right things happen. Bless them with the courage to stand for something, lest they fall for anything.

We pray in Your merciful name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 30, 2013.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable RICHARD J. DURBIN, a Senator from the State of Illinois, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. DURBIN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

MAKING CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask the Chair lay before the Senate a message from the House with respect to H. J. Res 59.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair lays before the Senate the following message from the House, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Resolved, That the House agree to the amendment of the Senate to the resolution (H.J. Res. 59) entitled "Joint Resolution Making Continuing Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2014, and for other purposes," with amendments.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to table the House amendments and ask for the yeas and nays on my motion.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to table.

The clerk will call the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 54, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 210 Leg.]

YEAS—54

Baldwin
Baucus
Begich
Bennet

Blumenthal
Boxer
Brown
Cantwell

Cardin
Carper
Casey
Coons

Donnelly
Durbin
Feinstein
Franken
Gillibrand
Hagan
Harkin
Heinrich
Heitkamp
Hirono
Johnson (SD)
Kaine
King
Klobuchar

Landrieu
Leahy
Levin
Manchin
Markey
McCaskill
Menendez
Merkley
Mikulski
Murphy
Murray
Nelson
Pryor
Reed

Reid
Rockefeller
Sanders
Schatz
Schumer
Shaheen
Stabenow
Tester
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Warner
Warren
Whitehouse
Wyden

NAYS—46

Alexander
Ayotte
Barrasso
Blunt
Boozman
Burr
Chambliss
Chiesa
Coats
Coburn
Cochran
Collins
Corker
Cornyn
Crapo
Cruz

Enzi
Fischer
Flake
Graham
Grassley
Hatch
Heller
Hoeven
Inhofe
Isakson
Johanns
Johnson (WI)
Kirk
Lee
McCain
McConnell

Moran
Murkowski
Paul
Portman
Risch
Roberts
Rubio
Scott
Sessions
Shelby
Thune
Toomey
Vitter
Wicker

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The motion to table the House amendments to the Senate amendment to the House resolution prevails.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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to a period of morning business for debate only until 4 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each; further, that the time until 4 p.m. be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority leader to be recognized at 4 p.m.

I ask unanimous consent that the first speaker to be recognized be the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Senator MIKULSKI.

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

The Senator from Maryland.

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, we are at the brink. We are only hours away from a possible government shutdown. All over my State and all over the Nation there are very devoted Federal employees who are waiting to hear: Are we going to be called non-essential to performing important government services?

Should they come in tomorrow? People have applied for small business loans. Are those loans going to be processed? People have applied for student loans. Are they going to be processed?

What is going to happen to the National Weather Service? What is going to happen at NIH? What is going to happen at the Food and Drug Administration, where people stand sentry over the safety of our food supply and our drug supply.

We don't know because we have just tabled the radical bill that the House sent over to us. It was deliberately designed to be politically provocative. Continuing resolutions were always about disputes over money. They were not about political, ideological viewpoints over past legislation.

I am pleased that what we did was to table it and send it back to the House. The Senate acted very responsibly last week on a short-term continuing funding resolution that got rid of politically motivated riders and kept the government working for the American people until November 15 to work out our differences on funding bills.

The House sent this back—yet one more bill that says if you don't delay the Affordable Care Act for 1 year, we will shut down the government. If you don't eliminate the benefits affecting prevention and particularly women's health, we will shut down the government. If the government shuts down tomorrow, it will be because of the House's viewpoint: My way or the highway.

A government shutdown is a serious matter. These are a few things that will happen if we don't come together across the aisle, across the dome, and across town to pass a clean short-term continuing resolution. I wish to take a minute to highlight how damaging a government shutdown is on the day-to-day lives of our American people and our economy.

Shutting down the Federal Government will have immediate and harmful consequences on our economy. Small Business Administration approval loans will be put on hold, and 28 million small businesses will no longer have access to federally assisted loans or technical assistance.

In the rural areas, the USDA Rural Development housing, farm loan and grant program will stop.

Let's go to the safety of our waterways. The Army Corps of Engineers will stop work on all flood control and navigation projects. This is what helps ensure that our ships can travel through America's waterways, whether they are coming up the Chesapeake Bay into the Port of Baltimore or they are traveling down the Mississippi River or the Missouri River or coming into the gulf.

The Department of Commerce will stop economic development, minority business, and international trade assistance programs.

I know that the House passed a separate amendment funding active duty military. I would hope so. These are men and women who put themselves in the line of duty.

I also wish to remind people that there are other people every day who are doing a job to protect the health, safety, and laws of the American people. I represent all of the men and women who work at the Food and Drug Administration. It is headquartered in my State, and 2,000 people—or 55 percent—will be furloughed at midnight.

FDA will stop monitoring imports at our borders. What does that mean? Those men and women whose job it is to stand sentry over the food supply of the United States of America, we are going to tell them they are non-essential. If they stand sentry over the safety of our drugs and our medical devices, we are telling them they are nonessential. I don't think the American people support that. They might be a little bit cranky about the Federal Government here or there, but I think they want their food to be safe, their drugs to be safe, and they want us to move ahead with these devices to make sure they are in clinical practice.

Over at the National Institutes of Health, which is located in Bethesda, MD—the National Institutes of Health and their subsidiaries that receive extramural funding throughout the United States of America—70 percent of the staff at NIH will be furloughed. Seventy percent of the 10,000 men and women who work at NIH will be furloughed at midnight. These are the people who are working on the cure for Alzheimer's, they are working on the cure for autism, and they are working on the cure for arthritis, and I am just going through the "a" words. We could go on to the "b" words. How about breast cancer? How about cancer itself? Last year, when the NIH announced that cancer rates in America had been reduced by 15 percent, instead of pinning medals on the people at NIH and

the private sector who worked with us on important drugs and biological products, we announced sequester. What kind of government would destroy the very agency that is set up to come up with cures in the case of Alzheimer's cognitive stretch-out? Seventy percent. And who are they? They are the lab technician people. They are the people who help run the administrative end of things, which enables those talented researchers to be able to do this.

The NIH Clinical Center won't be able to admit new patients or start new clinical trials. The NIH Clinical Center is a hospital at NIH. You don't go there unless you are really sick and unless you are really desperate and unless you really have no place to go. You go in with no hope. But that is what they have nicknamed NIH around America—not the National Institutes of Health but the National Institutes of Hope, that what they are doing today is going to lead to solving the problems of tomorrow. Why? Why are we furloughing 70 percent? And not only are we furloughing, we are saying: Bye-bye for now. You are nonessential.

Well, I think they are crucial. I think they are not only essential, but I think they are crucial. So I worry about what are our priorities.

Then we go to the weather forecasters. Oh, they will be on the job. They are located in my State too.

You might say: Well, do you have any people who work in the private sector?

People in Maryland work in the private sector because of the public sector.

Our law enforcement, our FBI, will be on the job. They are in the line of fire too, but they will be getting an IOU. Instead of an IOU, we should say to the FBI and to our border patrol and to our marshals, who are chasing sexual predators and human traffickers, not an IOU, we owe you a debt of gratitude. We owe you getting your pay on time. We shouldn't hide the fact you haven't received a cost of living for 3 years. And we shouldn't be dancing around with ideologically motivated shutdowns.

Social Security checks will go out, but the 18,000 people who will visit Social Security offices will find they are understaffed. On the average, half a million people call Social Security every day. They are going to get either no answer or a busy signal.

I could go on and on about what the consequences of a shutdown will be. We really cannot do that. So I say to my colleagues on the other side of the dome, please, let's pass a clean CR. Let's pass it to November 15. Let's negotiate on a middle-ground number. They have a budget number of \$988 billion, and they accept sequester as the new norm. Let's find a way to cancel sequester at least for 2 years.

I marked up the appropriations bills at \$1.058 trillion. That is the number the Senate passed in its Budget Committee in April. There is a \$70 billion

difference. I am ready to negotiate, but we can't capitulate. Let's find a middle ground.

There was a great American general and a great statesman and a real American icon—Colin Powell. Over and over during the Reagan administration he would say: Let's find that sensible center. Let's find that sensible center.

Let's avoid a shutdown. Let's stop playing slam-down politics. Let's come together and find a way to solve the problem of keeping the government open as well as a long-term fiscal solution for paying down our government's debt. I understand that. But also let's make sure we have a progrowth budget that lowers the unemployment rate, raises educational achievement, finds those cures for diseases affecting the American people. Let's have an FDA that can get them approved, ensuring safety and efficacy in the hands of our doctors here and doctors all over the world. Let's make sure that when we talk about American exceptionalism, we know where it comes from.

Mr. President, I know there are other colleagues who wish to speak. I now yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). The Senator from Missouri.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I find the position we are in right now beyond frustrating, and I can imagine what the American people must be thinking right now. It is very hard from a distance to figure out who has really lost their minds—one party, the other party, all of us, the President. But I really want to boil down what has occurred because it is stunning when you boil it down.

The House sent us a piece of legislation where they wanted to defund the health care reforms—ObamaCare—and that was the price they were demanding in order for the government to stay open. The ticket to admission for an open government was our getting rid of the health care bill. Well, we took that up and we defeated that bill. By a 10-vote margin, 54 to 44, we defeated that bill, and we sent it back to them with just the ticket to keep the government open—without an extra price of admission.

This is where it gets interesting. What happened after we sent that back? Did they take it up and defeat it? No. No. They didn't vote. I want to make sure the American people understand this. All of the Members of Congress who were elected to serve the people of this country didn't get a chance to vote because the Speaker decided there wouldn't be a vote in the House of Representatives on the Senate-passed measure.

Somebody said: Well, it is the Hastert rule.

I have searched the Constitution, and I can't find the Hastert rule. It is not there. So the question we have to ask right now is, Why won't they let the House vote? Maybe they will defeat a clean attempt just to keep the government open.

By the way, nobody here is against negotiating or compromise. We have compromised on the number in this continuing resolution, and we are perfectly willing and, in fact, we have been desperately trying to negotiate and compromise on the budget for months. Senator CRUZ has blocked our attempts to go to conference on the budget.

So it is not that none of us are willing to compromise. Maybe some of us aren't, but there is a good healthy bipartisan margin of Senators who want to compromise on issues surrounding Federal spending but not on keeping the government open and not on paying our bills. Let's get those done. Let's get those done. That is basic. Let's get it done.

So my plea today to Speaker BOEHNER is this: Quit making decisions on behalf of all your Members—a small group of you huddled in a back room—because that is what is happening. There are two or three men in a back room down the hall, and they are deciding whether they are going to allow the elected representatives of this country to vote. I say let the House vote. I think the American people may be surprised that there would be a healthy bipartisan margin to, in fact, keep the government open when the clock strikes midnight tonight.

Elections matter, and elections are what dictate what happens around here. We had an election last November. I remember it very well. I stood for election last November. There were two candidates for President of the United States, and every American citizen had a chance to decide who they wanted to lead this country. The contrast was very clear. One candidate said he was going to repeal ObamaCare on the very first day he was President. He was going to, by Executive order, wipe out ObamaCare on day one. The other candidate said: I am going to implement ObamaCare. That candidate won, and it wasn't even close.

Every single Democratic Senator who ran for reelection and voted for ObamaCare was reelected. Red State, purple State, blue State—all of us were reelected who voted for ObamaCare. In fact, a couple more were elected in States where Republicans had represented those States. We didn't lose seats, we picked up seats. Even in the House of Representatives, the raw votes, there were more Democratic votes cast in the House of Representatives than Republican votes. They have the majority because of the way the districts are drawn. And I understand they control that House, but should they control whether people get to vote? Let the House vote.

They say: ObamaCare is so unpopular; the American people don't want it.

Now, I get that the polling is not good for this reform, and I am perfectly willing, as we implement it, if we need to, to make tweaks and changes to make it better.

I hope my friends across the aisle will quit using this as a political 2 by

4 and help us make it as good as we can possibly make it because this isn't about any plot, this is about accessible and affordable health care for all Americans with a free market solution. These are all private insurance companies. There is not a government program in this. People are going to be able to choose between various private policies and various options, and they are never going to have to pay more than 9½ percent of their income for their insurance. The insurance companies aren't going to be able to swallow fat profits for golden parachutes for big CEOs anymore. They are going to have to spend 80 cents of every dollar for your health care. But it is all free market.

This was a Republican solution in the beginning. The candidate for President forgot that—former Governor Romney—this was his solution for Massachusetts when he was Governor.

Now, I will give the Republicans this: It is unpopular in the polls right now. But let's take this proposition: Guess what background checks for guns polls right now? I know the Presiding Officer knows painfully well what those numbers are because of the tragedy in his State. It is much higher, frankly, than those who say they think ObamaCare should be repealed—the Americans who support background checks on weapons purchases. So what would everyone on the other side of the aisle think if we decided, well, you know, we are going to shut down the government if you won't pass background checks on guns. It is what the American people want. We will just shut down the government if you won't pass it. That is not the way we legislate. That is not the constitutional framework our Founding Fathers put together. There would be outrage that we would try to shut down the government over background checks on guns. Yet the very same premise would apply to what they are doing.

The President won. The majority of the Senate are in fact individuals who support this valiant attempt to try to do something with a health care system that was headed off the rails, becoming more and more unaffordable every day. By the way, everything that is bad now is ObamaCare. I laughingly made a joke in my State that our university's team didn't do very well in offense during the first half. I said, it must be ObamaCare. Because no matter what is out there that people are upset about, somehow they manage to paint it with the ObamaCare brush.

I think people are going to be pleasantly surprised. It is not going to be as intrusive as some of the talking heads warned. It is going to provide a marketplace where people can pool risk and get a better deal. It is going to provide a lot more nights where parents can rest easy because they are not rolling the dice every day and depending on the emergency room for their day-to-day health needs.

My message today is very simple. All of this is premised on the notion that

one should be able to shut down our government because they don't get their way in an election. I don't think that is the role model we want to serve to the other governments in the world, much less to our kids. I think we can compromise on a lot. We can even work on making this bill better. But let's keep the government open, let's pay our bills, and then let's sit down and have some meaningful negotiation and compromise about Federal spending. I am somebody in my caucus who is always open to other ways we can cut spending. Some in my caucus don't feel as strongly as I do about that, but I am willing to listen to all sides and negotiate around the budget.

Let's not hold our economy hostage in the process. Real people are going to be hurt. This isn't just about who is on the Sunday morning shows, who is your primary opponent, what are they saying on cable news. This is about real folks, and we need to be focused on them.

I implore Speaker BOEHNER, let the Members vote. Just let them vote. Put it on the floor. He can do it in an hour. Put it on the floor and let them vote. If it is defeated, then let's talk. I will bet it won't be.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

DEFICIT-NEUTRAL DISASTER RELIEF ACT

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I believe the Deficit-Neutral Disaster Relief Act Senator BENNET and I have drafted is at the desk. It is my understanding both sides have cleared the bill, I would add, after a lot of pushing from Senator BENNET and me and other Coloradans, along with the Governor and Department of Transportation.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 1560, introduced earlier by Senators BENNET and UDALL of Colorado, that the bill be read three times and passed, and the motions to reconsider be made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 1560) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1560

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Deficit Neutral Disaster Relief Act".

SEC. 2. EMERGENCY RELIEF PROJECTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Transportation may obligate not more than \$450,000,000 of the amounts made available to carry out section 125 of title 23, United States Code, under chapter 9 of title X of division A of the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act, 2013 (Public Law 113-2; 127 Stat. 34) under the heading "EMERGENCY RELIEF PRO-

GRAM" under the heading "FEDERAL-AID HIGHWAYS" under the heading "FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION" for emergency relief projects in the State of Colorado arising from damage caused by flooding events in that State in calendar year 2013.

(b) EMERGENCY DESIGNATION FOR CONGRESSIONAL ENFORCEMENT.—In the Senate, this Act is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 403(a) of S. Con. Res. 13 (111th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2010.

(c) EMERGENCY DESIGNATION FOR STATUTORY PAYGO.—This Act is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4(g) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-139; 2 U.S.C. 933(g)).

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I wish to thank my colleagues and once again outline what this important act we passed will do. It is critically important.

I was on the floor Friday, and the Presiding Officer was here on Friday and was patient and listened to the case Senator BENNET and I made at that time. This is critically important because it will allow Colorado to begin rebuilding our battered roads and bridges and highways without having to wait years for relief. We are close now to getting this legislation to the President's desk, and I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House, with Senator BENNET, to get this bill signed into law as soon as possible.

Senator BENNET and I have been on the floor on a number of occasions in recent days to highlight how devastated certain parts of our beautiful State are as a result of these biblical floods we suffered a few weeks ago. Many communities are just now beginning to comprehend how serious the damage is and to see firsthand how many hundreds of miles of highways, roads, bridges, and other parts of our infrastructure are ruined or in some cases even washed away entirely.

I have had many occasions to see this damage firsthand in the last few weeks, starting in my own neighborhood, which was evacuated, but all over the northern front range. I was in Jamestown on Saturday. Senator BENNET was there a few days earlier. It is one of the worst-hit communities in Boulder Canyon. It is almost beyond description. The homes are literally washed off their foundations, cars were embedded in the ground, completely buried. Families were left in some cases with 2 to 3 feet of mud and silt, river cobbles literally inside their homes. I was in one home in Jamestown standing on the mud and silt, and my head was touching the ceiling because of the 3 feet of debris that was inside that house. We have seen entire roads and highways completely decimated. Without this help, it is a fact that communities will not be able to rebuild.

By passing the Deficit-Neutral Disaster Relief Act, we have lifted the statutory cap of \$100 million to a limit of \$450 million. The money applies to highway relief, so it will be enough to help us rebuild swiftly.

As I have done here before, I want to again make it clear that this isn't new

money. It doesn't increase budget authority or increase net outlays. It simply allows us to access an already existing appropriated fund of money.

Historically, this \$100 million cap on relief has routinely been recognized by Congress as an unwise impediment to helping States recover and it has been raised for nearly every natural disaster in recent years. Examples would be familiar to anybody listening. We raised the cap on transportation disaster relief for Hurricanes Gustav, Ike, Irene, Sandy, as well as during the Missouri River basin flooding in 2011.

I am truly appreciative and truly grateful that all of our colleagues have come together to recognize that the floods in Colorado are no exception. We are all in this together when it comes to responding to national disasters. I am glad that today we can say to Coloradans Members of Congress from all across the United States of America have stood with us in our recovery efforts, and we will stand with them in their recovery efforts as we have in the past as we experience natural disasters.

I thank the Senate for clearing this crucial legislation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and look forward to the remarks of my colleague Senator BENNET.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I will be brief because I think Senator UDALL has covered it very well. But I also want to rise today on this floor to thank all 100 of our colleges who were necessary for getting this done and for getting it passed. We have to move it along to the President's desk.

There are a lot of times when people at home wonder whether anybody in this place is listening to them and whether we are doing something other than playing politics with each other. This is a clear case where people here have listened to the people in Colorado, who have generously from time to time helped people in other States that were confronting disasters. Now it is our turn to ask for help, and that help has been granted.

I wish to thank Senator UDALL for his leadership in particular, but also all the Members in the Senate who made this possible.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all quorum calls during the period of morning business be charged equally to both sides.

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

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes.

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

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I want to make a few comments about the crisis that is unfolding before us. Right now some colleagues in the Senate and others over on the House side are holding the entire American economy hostage to make their favorite point on policy. I must say that this blackmail against ordinary working class Americans—threatening to steal whatever momentum our economy has rather than build greater momentum and greater job growth—is deeply misguided. That is really as polite a way as I can possibly put it.

Think about what working families have been through over the last few years. The deregulation of Wall Street leading to predatory mortgages that hurt millions of families, and then the securities that those were based on, proceeded to derail our entire economy, hurting millions more. Families lost their savings. They lost their jobs. They lost the equity in their house.

All that working families are asking for is a little bit of common sense. Don't do further damage to the economy that is struggling to recover. Yet certain colleagues here in the Senate and over in the House seem to believe that the little people don't matter, the working people do not matter, the stability of the foundation for families and living-wage jobs doesn't matter because they can play whatever political games they want and the only people hurt are ones they do not see in their life. Maybe they live in a gated community. Maybe they live in a bubble. But I see those people. I see them every day. They are the salt of the Earth. They are the workshop that takes America forward. They are the small businesses across this Nation. All they are asking for is a little reasonableness and common sense.

Some of my colleagues have said this crisis comes because the majority party in the Senate has refused to negotiate. Nothing could be further from the truth. Negotiation in the budget process starts with each side passing a budget resolution and holding a conference committee. But it is Members of the minority of this Chamber who have come to this floor at least 18 times to block the start of a conference committee in order to work out the budget. I cannot imagine in my wildest dreams why they are terrified of there being a conversation between leadership in the House and leadership in the Senate, meeting with the television cameras on to work out the details of a budget compromise. But they seem terrified, petrified, scared to death that there will be a conversation between

the House and Senate that would lead to a compromise.

So, indeed, there has been obstruction on compromise, and we know exactly where it is. They are the same individuals who are trying to drive the economy over the cliff right now. Moreover, members of this party said let's go further. The Senate has a number. The House has a number. But the budget conference committee is being blocked. Let's simply accept the House number, and not split it down the middle, not insist on our number, let's take the House number. That is going far beyond the middle path, if you will. That is a major compromise. If you are looking for compromise, it is happening with the leadership of the Senate putting forward a compromise that takes the House number for the budget. It appears that certain individuals in this body just do not want to take yes for an answer.

I am going to conclude my remarks. I see my colleague, the esteemed Senator from Illinois has arrived. I want to close with this notion. This is not the first crisis that has been artificially manufactured that has damaged the American economy. Let us remember that similarly we faced this in April 2011 with the continuing resolution. We faced a manufactured crisis with the debt ceiling in July of 2011. We faced the December 2012 fiscal cliff that did substantial damage; in March of this year, the continuing resolution, which brings us up to right now.

This is not all. The same individuals who are threatening at this moment to drive our economy over a cliff are saying we will do it again in a couple of weeks over another debt ceiling issue and when this continuing resolution expires a few weeks from now, if we get one done, we will do it again a few weeks from now—three crises in a period of just a few weeks. If you want to destroy the economy for working Americans, this is how it is done, and it is unacceptable. We need a bipartisan, commonsense caucus to come together and simply say no to those who are trying to create this terrible blackmail using American working families in the process.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes as in morning business.

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

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, we are just hours away from a government shutdown. I think tea party Republicans saw the "Breaking Bad" dramatic depiction of reckless behavior last night and thought they could put on an even better finale, create even more drama, and cook up even more toxic ideas. They thought they could break this government in every bad way possible. These tea party antics are the stuff of fairy tales. The way the GOP is writing this story at the stroke of midnight as we turn the calendar to-

ward October, our government and potentially our economic recovery turn into a pumpkin.

But it is the tea party GOP who are in fantasyland by thinking we will allow them to cut off ObamaCare, shut down government, and melt down our economy. Democrats are not going to allow them to do this.

What do the American people want? Americans want our military to get paid on time. Americans want our seniors to get the benefits they have earned and depend on. Americans want to be able to respond to floods in Colorado or wildfires in the West.

The American people don't want the government to shut down. Americans want a business plan that completes this recovery, creates jobs, and gets our economy back on track. They want us to work together to accomplish this goal.

What are the effects of the tea party Republican tactics? By forcing Congress to govern by going from crisis to crisis, tea party Republicans hope to chip away at the bedrock programs that run our country and help our people.

First, the tea party did this with sequestration, which is a fancy word for mindless cuts in programs that help ordinary families in our country. Now they are going after the ObamaCare law. What is next are their enduring targets such as Social Security, Medicare, and the safety net programs that millions of Americans depend on. These are the same Republicans who want to privatize Social Security. They want to turn Medicare into a voucher program. Now they want to reverse the progress achieved by the legendary Ted Kennedy, who made it clear that in the United States of America health care is a right and not a privilege.

The tea party Republicans are playing high-wire politics with our economy so they can take away the social safety net for millions of American families. This bill is just a preview of coming attractions. Two weeks from now we will be careening to the next crisis, this time over whether America will pay its debts. If we do not raise the debt ceiling, we will not be able to pay our bills starting on October 17.

What is the harm of defaulting on our debts? Our Nation's stock and bond markets could go into a free fall that will damage the full faith and credit of our country, the bedrock of the entire American economy. What does that mean? The full faith and credit of the United States is in question.

If you took out a mortgage, had a car loan, bought some furniture, and when the bill came due you said: I am not going to pay these bills, what do you think would happen? Your credit score would plummet. It would throw your financial life into chaos for years. No one would lend you money, or, at a minimum, you would be hit with sky-high interest payments because of the risk that you wouldn't pay the next time either.

Americans ran up these bills. We promised these payments. We should pay what we promise, and then we need to stop lurching from one crisis to another, scrambling to stitch together last-minute deals that only last until the very next crisis.

It is time to end these games. It is time to end the uncertainty. It is time to do what we were sent here to do—to get to work creating jobs for American families so they can have a mortgage and put their kids through school. That is what we should be talking about here, the prosperity of all Americans.

This shutdown today is a preview of a debate over a meltdown of the American economy. If, in fact, we go to a debt ceiling and we haven't found a way of working together here on the Senate floor, Democrats and Republicans, along with Democrats and Republicans from the House of Representatives, those who are in the most jeopardy are those who are watching us with their mouths open, agape, wondering how their system of government can operate this way.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MERKLEY). The assistant majority leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in less than 9 hours, unless there is an intervening effort that is successful, the government will shut down. I know people across America are scratching their heads and saying: Why? How did it ever reach this point?

I went through O'Hare this morning—I have done that a lot in my life—on my way back to work, and the reaction of people was interesting. People I didn't know walked up to me and said: Hang in there. Good luck. We hope you can do it.

I realized people across America are listening and watching this, and they are trying to figure out who is right, who is wrong, and what difference does it make?

About an hour ago I was presiding as we took the vote on the latest House amendments. In the middle of the vote, my staffer came up and handed me an e-mail. The e-mail said there was a House e-mail that was circulating, and here is what it said: After the Senate tables the House amendments to the CR later this afternoon, and the papers come back to the House, we will send it back to the Senate with another amendment delaying the individual mandate and ObamaCare for a year and affect the Members' health subsidy as well.

Unfortunately, that message kind of betrays what is going on here. We made it clear on the Senate side that we are sending a clean CR, with no political strings attached to it, to extend the government services and allow them to continue for at least 6 weeks while we try to work things out on a bipartisan basis. What we keep getting back from the House of Representatives is all sorts of political strings, such as the

medical device tax, ObamaCare, conscience clause when it comes to family planning. All of these are being thrown back to us as conditions for us if we are going to fund our government.

If we want to on the Democratic side, we have the votes to put our own conditions on this. I can think of a couple: that the House takes up the bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform bill we passed months ago here and they have never even addressed in the House. That would be a good one, wouldn't it? At least from my point of view.

How about the bipartisan farm bill we passed twice in the Senate that they failed to pass in the House of Representatives for years? Why wouldn't we make that one of the conditions? I can think of a few more. But we didn't do it. We sent them a clean CR, a clean spending bill, and said to them: Let's extend the functions of government.

John Kennedy's book, "Profiles In Courage," talks about men and women who served our Nation and showed extraordinary courage. Some of us would like to think that at least once or twice in our public careers we get close to that standard. There is no political courage in what the House Republicans are doing. They are not standing up, putting themselves at any political risk. They are threatening to shut down the government to affect the jobs of hundreds of thousands of innocent Federal employees. These are people who get up and go to work every single day for this country because they love their jobs and they love this country and they do a great job every day. They are viewed with disdain by so many critics of government, but were it not for those men and women and the contribution they make, we would not be the great Nation we are at this moment in time.

At midnight tonight—in less than 9 hours—our government will shut down. Many—hundreds of thousands of them—will be told: Don't come to work. If that happens, we will be lesser for it—not just the fact that we cannot produce the services our government needs to produce to help our people, and not just the fact that innocent Federal employees will lose their paychecks. Many of them will not get paid for the time we are losing.

But equally important is what it says about us and what it says about America. We stand and we say: We are different, and we are proud of being different. We are the oldest democracy on the face of the Earth. We are, in many ways, different from some other Nations, and we are proud of that difference.

Sadly, at midnight tonight the difference is not going to be something of which we can be proud. It is the failure of political leaders in Congress to fund the government of the United States of America. It is the failure of political leaders in Congress to fund our government.

What this comes down to is very basic. There is a reason why we have

elections. There is a reason why ultimately the decision on this issue, and all the other issues, will be given to the American people. What I ask them to do is to watch carefully what is happening in Washington and whether they want to continue it.

Senator MERKLEY of Oregon came to the floor and talked about the beginning of this tea party effort and the first threat to shut down the government. This is not altogether new, but it is unusual that we face this. Now it is becoming more frequent, more regular, business as usual that we are going to shut down the government. That is the tea party approach. That is how they get their attention: 21 hours speaking on the floor or threatening to shut down the government. I don't think that is the answer to America's future. I think it is a problem.

If you listened to Senator MERKLEY from Oregon, he talked about the fact that we passed a budget resolution in the Senate—I thought it was a good effort—to try to figure out what our spending will be in the next fiscal year. We came up with a number, and the House came up with a different number. The Founding Fathers of the Constitution anticipated that and created an opportunity for the House and Senate to work out their differences through a conference committee.

Senator MURRAY of Washington chairs our Budget Committee. She brought this to the floor and asked for unanimous consent to take this budget resolution to the conference committee so we could agree. She brought that request to the floor 6 months ago. The tea party Republicans stood—some of the same Republicans we are seeing now—and objected to this meeting. They said: No way. We won't allow this meeting between the Democrats and Republicans.

Senator MURRAY and her backers, on the committee and off, renewed that request over and over and over, and every time the tea party Republicans objected. They did not want us to do the orderly, constitutional thing of sitting down to work out our differences. They wanted a confrontation, and now they have it. We were unable to reach a budget number, unable to pass appropriation bills because of their objections, and now we face a government shutdown.

If this is what you want as the ordinary course of business in Washington, if this is what you want for America and our Federal Government and the good people who work for it, then keep on voting for tea party folks. This is their attitude and their idea. This is their idea of the new normal.

Well, it shouldn't be the new normal. America is better than this.

There is something that is encouraging. There are a handful of Republicans who are finally standing and saying: I have had enough of it.

Senator JOHN MCCAIN and I disagree on so many things, and agree on a few things, but we are different politically.

I admire him not just for his service in the Senate but what he has given to this country. He came to the floor and gave a 10-minute speech after the Texas Senator finished his 21-hour speech. Senator McCAIN made more sense in 10 minutes than in the 21 hours that preceded it.

He said: I don't like ObamaCare. I voted against it. I want to change it, but get real; it is the law. It was found to be constitutional by the Court. The President, who authored it, was re-elected by 5 million votes in America. That is how a democracy works. Those who won't accept ObamaCare and want to try to stop it will not accept the verdict of this democracy. We need to go forward and prove it. That was Senator McCAIN's speech to us. It was a good speech.

Upstairs Senator SCHUMER talked about what we could have done in the past. What if we said: Unless all of the Bush tax cuts are repealed, we are not going to allow the government to be funded? We didn't do that. We shouldn't have done that. It is not responsible.

I hope this doesn't come to pass. I hope at midnight we don't shut down this government. There will be a lot of unhappy people in the Federal service, and they don't deserve it. These are innocent people who want to do a good job for this Nation. There will be a lot of people hurt on the outside because they can't have access to government services. There will be things that we will miss doing that will have an impact, and we may never know it.

What impact will it have at the National Institutes of Health if they suspend medical research until this is over, just put it off a couple of days or maybe a couple of weeks if it gets really awful? Then what happens? A delay in finding a cure, a drug, a medical device. All of these things make a difference in the lives of a lot of innocent people. So it is not an act of courage to play politics with the lives of other people, with the future of America, and with the future of our economy.

Yes, this is why we have elections, so the American people can say: Enough. We are not going to put up with this anymore. We need to have responsible Republicans and Democrats working together to solve our problems.

I think that is why we were sent here, not to lurch from one confrontation to the next.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask to speak in morning business for 10 minutes.

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

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, after 5 years of being a parent, I have gotten used to temper tantrums. It is an unavoidable part of having kids. They demand something—they want a second dessert, they want another 10 minutes before bedtime—and if they don't get

it, they storm out of the room. That aspect of early human nature—the inability to deal with defeat and the unwillingness to compromise—luckily goes away over time as we get older and wiser and more thoughtful—everywhere except for Washington, DC.

By now everybody gets what is going on. As Senator DURBIN said, we are only a handful of hours away from a government shutdown—another manufactured, made-up, totally avoidable crisis. This one is just because we can't pass a 6-month continuing resolution. We are having a problem just keeping the government open under the exact same rules that it has been open because a small set of tea party Senators and Congressmen are basically throwing a temper tantrum because they haven't gotten their way.

It is not news to anybody that Republicans oppose the health care law. They opposed it back when it was passed by both Chambers and signed by the President. They opposed it when the Supreme Court upheld the legislation. Their Presidential candidate opposed it when he got roundly defeated in the 2012 election. My opponent and the opponent of every single Senator who stood for election who voted for the law opposed it as well, and every single time they lost.

Over and over Republicans have made it clear that they don't like the Affordable Care Act. They voted 40 times to repeal it or defund it or postpone it in the House of Representatives. This is despite the fact that today the Affordable Care Act is saving millions of seniors millions of dollars because they don't have to pay for drugs in the doughnut hole. This is despite the fact that starting in January it is going to save millions of people across the country from having to go into bankruptcy because they can't afford their health care. But Republicans are refusing to vote for a budget that will keep the government operating unless this health care bill is stopped.

For too many of those urging a government shutdown, government has just become an abstraction. They have sold themselves on the idea that government is so twisted and malignant that shutting it down just wouldn't really do anything. After all, if the goal is to starve the beast, then what better way than putting the beast into a coma for a couple of days or a week.

But that is not how this works. Government does real things for real people. It provides paychecks for 9,000 people in Connecticut. It pays Social Security benefits and processes claims for disabled veterans. It inspects our food. At the NIH, it comes up with cures for diseases. The markets watch whether the government operates because they actually know that the private sector works better when the public sector is working better. So that is why today the market once again has been falling through the floor, as it will if we move forward with this madness.

Just as we don't give in to our kids when they threaten us if we don't give

them what they want, America cannot reward this “my way or the highway” approach from the tea party. I have strong beliefs, just as my tea party Republican friends do, but I also get that I am part of a majoritarian deliberative body. Senator McCASKILL and Senator DURBIN made the point, as did the Presiding Officer. We all would love to attach things to this continuing resolution. There are 20 grieving families in Newtown, CT, who do not understand why 90 percent of the American public wants background checks on weapons and we can't pass that in the Senate. I bet some of them would think it might make sense for us to condition our support of the continuing resolution on getting background checks on gun purchases. Ninety percent of the American public supports that. But we are not doing that. That is not how we govern—hold the entire Federal Government hostage to get what we want.

Ultimately, though, this just can't be how this place works. This is a 6-week continuing resolution. As the Presiding Officer said, it is just going to happen 6 weeks from now and 6 weeks after that.

I heard that a long time ago this place used to actually be involved in the business of running the country. It doesn't feel like that anymore. As I sat there on the dais a week ago now watching the middle act of Senator CRUZ's long, long, long speech, it didn't feel a lot different than it has for most days that I have watched the tea party over the last several years. It felt as if I were a theater goer.

What is happening this week really isn't exceptional. It is just the latest and worst example of a long trendline away from legislating and toward playacting. With rare exceptions usually prompted only by deadlines and cliffs and fake crises, we don't do anything here any longer. We just dig trenches and we make arguments. We pass fake bills. We playact. Occasionally, when the stacks of all the things around us are about to come teetering down we stop and we push them back up again instead of thinking for a couple of seconds that if we just stopped, sat back, and actually restacked those sets of things so they didn't come crashing down, we would probably be better off. We just play parts.

There is nobody better at playing their part than the tea party Republicans. Their character is recalcitrant, uncompromising, and destructive, and we have seen all of that on display this week. If we get beyond this crisis, we will just see it once again. But there is no curtain call here in Congress after which we can pull back our masks and share a good laugh. We are still all going to be left on stage tasked with picking up the pieces.

I think I am past believing that these folks are just going to start playing a different role. It is time for the American public to start asking some questions about people before they send

them here: Are you willing to compromise? Are you interested in actually running the government? Are you going to score your term based on whether you deliver for the American people rather than how many Twitter followers you have or how many times you showed up on the TV news that week?

If this government shuts down tonight, it is just because of a temper tantrum or, put another way, a really, really bad play, the third act of which has gone on way, way too long.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). The majority leader.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

DARREL THOMPSON

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this is not the time for me to stand and speak about the loss of a staff member whom I feel so strongly about.

The man I am talking about is Darrel Thompson, who, as most people know, has been with me for 10 years. He was Obama's campaign manager when he ran for the Senate, and he is a wonderful man. I am sorry it is not appropriate for me to take Senate time now.

MAKING CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR MILITARY PAY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to H.R. 3210, which was received from the House in the last 24 hours. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read three times, passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 3210) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. The order now before this body is that we have morning business until 4 o'clock today. I ask unanimous consent to extend that until 6 p.m. under the provisions of the previous order and that I be recognized after that time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Republican leader.

PROTECTING MILITARY PAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the unanimous consent request the majority leader just propounded was one a number of my colleagues were about to ask that dealt with a military pay issue, and a number of them are here on the floor. I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy on the issue of protecting military pay.

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

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, as the Republican leader noted, there are a number of Members here on the floor who have come en masse from a meeting we just held following the tabling of the latest House proposal that would keep the Federal Government operating and make sure all of our uniformed military would continue to get paid, together with the other operations of the Federal Government. It is clear that it was under the pressure of the knowledge that we were coming to the floor to ask for unanimous consent and the knowledge of how, frankly, untenable it would be to object to that that the majority leader has quite skillfully come to the floor to try to preempt this issue. The truth is that none of us should be under any illusion that the majority leader has done anything other than make it more likely that we will have a shutdown of the Federal Government tonight.

The House has sent over several reasonable proposals which would keep the Federal Government operating and which would also make sure our troops would be paid—not just uniformed military but other government personnel performing important jobs. Rather than calling us in yesterday after the House acted—we know that perhaps the majority leader and other Members enjoyed watching a little bit of professional football yesterday—they waited until this afternoon to cut the legs out from under the House proposal and make it much more likely that the government will shut down.

The House worked late into the night this weekend to draft a compromise proposal that would fund the government and avert a shutdown. The House Members sent the proposal over to the Senate, and the majority leader did nothing until today—no emergency session, no bipartisan negotiations.

There is a report in Politico that President Obama was suggesting calling the leadership in both of the Houses—Republicans and Democrats alike—to the White House to have a meeting to say: What can we do to solve this impasse? If the story is to be believed, it was HARRY REID who shut that down, just as he is going to be responsible for shutting down the Federal Government by the actions he took earlier today.

So the question is, Who is really being unreasonable? Who is really being stubborn? Who is really seeking to gain partisan advantage over the best interests of the country?

Of course, we know the President has been eager to negotiate with the President of Iran about a very serious issue: Iran's nuclear aspirations, but he will not talk to the Speaker of the House of Representatives or the Republican leader of the Senate. He will not talk to them, but he will negotiate with the Iranian President.

He seems absolutely allergic to doing his job. He can give a heck of a speech. He is a skillful orator. But when it comes to actually doing his job, he is missing in action. He will not negotiate over a government shutdown, and he will not negotiate over raising the debt limit.

In the past, President Obama has urged Republicans to offer just a little bit of compromise when he likes to be the voice of reason. But now he himself refuses to engage in any sort of negotiation and refuses to offer any kind of compromise whatsoever.

Is it possible the President of the United States thinks his own health care law is perfect in every way? Seventy-nine Members of this body voted against the medical device tax. The House could pass that piece of legislation and send it over here and attach it to the continuing resolution. The President himself has repeatedly delayed different provisions of the health care law, including the employer mandate. What we would like to do is get the same break for the rest of the American people as he gave businesses.

The bill that was passed by the House of Representatives would have delayed ObamaCare for 1 year, and it would also have repealed the medical device tax, which is already killing jobs and hammering medical innovation.

Now we are being told that those sort of very same proposals, which mirror the same proposals the President has unilaterally taken or which are supported by a bipartisan majority of the Senate—they are called an act of extremism.

What is more extreme, trying to negotiate through an impasse to resolve this issue of the Federal Government functioning or to refuse to negotiate, to stonewall against any reasonable proposal by the House and to make it more likely that the Federal Government will shut down tonight? I ask who is being more unreasonable and more stubborn?

We know the clock is ticking. The American people are absolutely disgusted. I share their frustration. I can only hope cooler heads will prevail among our friends on the other side of the aisle.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I appreciate being part of the colloquy with the Senator from Texas, and I was listening to his comments.

I remember being asked by Senator MCCONNELL and the House Speaker JOHN BOEHNER to speak on behalf of Republicans at the President's health care summit 3 years ago about the new

health care law. I was the first speaker there and since that time have done my best to try to void its passage and then to repeal and replace it.

But I'm not in the shut down the government crowd. I'm in the let's-take-over-the-government crowd and elect a number of more Republicans and even a Republican President who agrees with us and who wants a different kind of health care law, one that introduces choice and competition and that actually reduces health care costs for most Americans.

What bothers me so much about this impasse today is the effect it might have on our military men and women around the world. I'm trying to imagine what it must be like for someone fighting in Afghanistan whose check might be late, whose spouse is at Fort Campbell, and whose mortgage is due today or tomorrow or the next day, or what if the Department of Defense school closes there and that spouse has a job and no childcare? These are very practical problems we need to be thinking about. We need not be thinking about shutting down the government. We need to be thinking about a way to fund the government and change the health care law at the same time.

Now, the House of Representatives has tried once and now is trying it again to make a reasonable offer. These discussions are all about compromise, about taking suggestions that come from one body to the other body and taking what you can. So if they have come back and said: Well, the United States Senate had 79 Senators, including many Democrats, who voted to repeal the medical device tax. And they said: Let's delay the individual mandate for a year.

I'm surprised the President himself has not done that. The President himself has delayed seven provisions, major provisions in the health care law, including the employer mandate. The regulations aren't ready. The program is supposed to start tomorrow. It would seem to me it would actually be to the President's benefit, as well as the country's benefit, to say instead of just delaying parts and exempting these people, let's get it right. Let's delay it for 1 year.

That is what the House of Representatives, the Republican House, has said to the Senate. They have said let's repeal the medical device tax, a particularly onerous 2.3% tax on top of revenues that increases the cost of medical devices for millions of Americans. We all agree we ought to get rid of it—79 of us do anyway, including about as many Democrats as Republicans. And the President himself has acknowledged this law isn't ready. The chairman of the Democratic Committee that wrote it says it is a coming train wreck.

So it seems to me this is a reasonable suggestion from the House of Representatives to say let's work on getting rid of ObamaCare, that is what we would like to do, or changing it, that is

what they would like to do to make it work, but let's fund the government. Let's not run the risk that one single soldier fighting in Afghanistan has a paycheck that is one day late because his spouse is home in Fort Campbell and the mortgage can't be paid or the Department of Defense School is closed and there is no childcare for the spouse who has a job while her husband or his wife is fighting overseas. Now, that's something we should not allow to happen, whether it's Republicans or Democrats.

It may be that the majority leader agrees with that and he has brought that up and we have brought that up, but we should do more than bring up political points. People expect us to act like adults, work together, come to a result, so we can change the health care law and we can keep the government going.

I've said for three years that instead of the historic mistake we passed which expanded health care delivery systems that already cost too much, we should go step by step to have a health care law that actually reduces health care costs: Make Medicare solvent instead of taking one-half trillion dollars out of it for other programs. Give Medicaid more flexibility so Governors can serve more people. Repeal the medical device tax. Make it easier for employers who want to help employees have a healthier lifestyle so they can have cheaper insurance. Allow people to buy insurance across state lines. Allow small businesses to pool their resources and offer insurance. I have listed a half dozen already, steps we could agree on that would reduce health care costs in the country.

I'm not in the shut down the government crowd, and neither are most everybody I know around here. We are in the take-over-the-government crowd, and let's elect enough Republicans and a Republican President to change the health care law.

But in the meantime, we should make absolutely sure that men and women, whether on Active Duty or in the National Guard, not on Active Duty at this time, we should make sure they are paid on the day they are supposed to be paid and their spouses are not waiting for the check.

I thank the Senator from Texas for engaging in this colloquy, and I wish to join him in this effort.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, thank you.

The idea that ObamaCare—the Affordable Health Care Act—over time will be seen in history as having been a good thing for the American people, I guess that is a bit in doubt. The President keeps saying there will come a day when we will look back and claim to have voted for this. Maybe he is right. Maybe that day, around the bend, down the road, over the hill, is there.

All I can say is don't we know enough now about the Affordable Health Care

Act—ObamaCare—to slow down, take a time out, and see if we can make it better? Because the problems associated with the act are real. We do not need any more information. We do not need any more time. We just need to fix it in a bipartisan fashion. We passed it in a partisan fashion. Can we begin to look at the law anew in a bipartisan fashion? America would be better off.

What do we know? We know a lot of people are working 29 hours, when they had 40-hour work. If you do not believe me, ask the unions. I never thought I would live to say this: Just listen to the unions. I do not say that a lot about their positions, but they are telling the President and anybody who will listen that ObamaCare—the Affordable Health Care Act—is denying the 40-hour workweek. Why can't we do something about that?

The medical device manufacturers, the people who do all the very neat things to make life better, particularly for people who have been devastated in Iraq and Afghanistan, coming up with ways to make better the lives of people who had catastrophic injury—thirty-four of our Democratic friends have said this tax is not a good idea for that sector of the economy.

So the jury is in on enough for us to slow down and start over and get this thing right. The good news for today is that we are not going to agree to blame each other. They are not going to accept blame. We are not going to accept blame about where we are. But the one thing today is I think we have solved the problem, at least partially, for the military. The people on the civilian side who work for the military, I do not know if they are covered.

But I want America to understand that the Congress did something appropriate just a few minutes ago; that is, to tell the men and women in the military: Do not worry about this debacle up here in Washington when it comes to your paycheck. You are going to get paid. I will talk later on down the road about what kind of military we are handing to the next generation, what kind of funding we have for the military and how smart sequestration is.

But I just want to ask my colleagues, don't we know enough already about the Affordable Health Care Act to stop and work together before we plunge on, because it starts tomorrow. I do not know why our Democratic friends are so insistent that we cannot take a timeout, start over, and see if we can find some bipartisan consensus. Until we do that, this problem only gets worse.

I would conclude with this thought: The Democratic Party came up with the Affordable Care Act. They passed it on a party-line vote. But this thing is just not helping Democrats or hurting Republicans, it is hurting the economy as a whole.

So the one thing I can tell you about big ideas: When one party pushes it through and nobody else on the other side signs up, we need to be wary about that product.

I yield.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I see my colleague from Texas who gave a very high-profile speech for about 21 hours the other night on the subject of ObamaCare. I know he feels passionately about it, and his efforts have captured the imagination of the American people and reminded them of the various failures of this piece of legislation, some of which we have talked about perhaps fixing in the course of this ping-ponging of the continuing resolution.

But I might ask him, through the Chair, there have been so many failures, so many promises that have been made about ObamaCare that are obviously not going to be kept—things such as, if you like what you have, you can keep it. I think that is one of the complaints the Senator from South Carolina mentioned earlier, that organized labor—Mr. Trumka, among others—went to the White House to get a special carve-out for. We were told the President said: The average family of four would see a reduction of \$2,500 in the cost of their health care, and that had not proven to be true—so many promises that have not been kept, so many broken promises, so many reasons why we ought to be working together through the course of this to fix it.

So I would ask my colleague, through the Chair, perhaps he can list a few more reasons why he believes we need to be dealing with ObamaCare.

I know his preferred method was defunding ObamaCare. I know he has not given up on that. I am a cosponsor of his legislation that would accomplish that. But I would ask my colleague, through the Chair, if he might comment on that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under a previous order, the majority leader is to be recognized at 4 o'clock.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I was happy to ask unanimous consent to pass the bill that we just passed to ensure that the troops will be paid. But I do disagree with the remarks of my Republican colleagues and much of what they said in the last few minutes.

Let's talk about what was in this amendment that they sent us, this message they sent to us. Among other things, here is what it had in it: A provision—this is hard to comprehend, but listen to this—that would allow any employer, insurance plan or individual to refuse to cover any of the women's health preventative services that were included by Senator MIKULSKI in her women's health amendment, things like contraception, for virtually any reason during the 1-year delay.

That was in their amendment. It was spoken of clearly—I will talk about it a little later—by a cancer survivor in the House of Representatives, DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. It would have an adverse effect on cancer survivors, on women. That is one thing they did.

There has been a lot of talk here about the medical devices revenue issue. This is something that we will take a look at. We need to do that. But remember this magnanimous offer to get rid of this by the Republicans in the House and in the Senate would run up the debt by \$30 billion. How do you like that? \$30 billion. No offset. No pay-go. What does it matter? They are fixated on ObamaCare. I mean fixated on it.

My friend from Texas referred to it as a bill. It is not a bill. It is the law. It has been for 4 years. My friend from Tennessee said he thinks that this should be resolved by having a Republican President. Less than a year ago, the American people took a look at that. The No. 1 issue in the campaign: ObamaCare. That was the No. 1 issue.

Overwhelmingly, the American people said: We reject the Republicans' efforts to get rid of it. Republicans always oppose big things. They opposed Social Security. They opposed Medicare. I have carried with me for 25 years—I have it in my wallet here, and it is getting old and frayed. But here is what it says:

I was there fighting the fight, one of 12 voting against Medicare because we knew it would not work in 1965.

Senator Dole.

Now, we did not get rid of it in round one because we do not think it's politically smart. But we believe Medicare is going to wither on the vine.

Newt Gingrich.

Medicare has no place in a free world. Social Security is a rotten trick. I think we are going to have to bite the bullet on Social Security and phase it out over time.

Former leader in the House Dick Armey.

They opposed Social Security and they opposed Medicare. But even though they opposed it, Social Security is popular with Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. Medicare is popular. Why is it popular? My first elected job was on a big hospital district in Nevada. It was an indigent hospital, in some frame of reference.

But 40 percent of the people that were senior citizens that were admitted to that hospital had no health insurance. We made sure that somebody vouched for their hospital bill: father, mother, son, brother, neighbor. If they did not pay, we went after them. We had a big collection agency in the hospital.

The reason they like Medicare is because today virtually 100 percent of seniors that come into a hospital have Medicare. That is why they like it.

ObamaCare. Tomorrow in Nevada 600,000 people will have the opportunity to sign up on the exchanges. By the way, the exchanges were established by a Republican Governor, Brian Sandoval. People there can buy—some people can buy health insurance for \$100, people who have nothing. Just give this ObamaCare a little time, and it will be looked back at as Social Security and Medicare. Right now, people love what they are able to get off this. I will go through some of that stuff.

Let's review where we are. This weekend Republicans in the House of Representatives did what we all feared they would do; they voted to shut down the government. Republicans knew their empty political stunt would fall on its face in the Senate. It did. Yet they voted to hold the government hostage until Democrats agree to return to the days when insurance companies put profits before patient care. That is the way it was.

Their vote was strikingly irresponsible and stunningly callous. Republicans do not seem to understand that stripping health insurance from millions of Americans would literally cost lives. Maybe none of those Republicans have received a doctor's bill that they could not pay. Maybe none of those Republicans spent a night awake worrying about whether a heart attack or a car accident would drive them into bankruptcy or what they would do with their mom or their dad, their brother or sister who has no health insurance and who is sick.

Millions of Americans have experienced the fears I just described. For a glimpse of just how little regard Republicans have for struggling American families, look no further than the chief Senate rabble rouser, Senator TED CRUZ. Listen to this. He told David Gregory of Meet the Press how easy it is for the average American to get health insurance, even during these difficult times. Here is what he said: "If you want people to get health insurance, the best way for them to get health insurance is to get a job." That is what he said. I am not making this up.

His comment comes at a time when more than 11 million Americans are still struggling to find work and when millions more who already have jobs still lack health insurance. That is why we passed ObamaCare in the first place, to ensure access to quality, affordable health insurance for all Americans.

To Republicans, ObamaCare is a punch line to rile up their base. But for American families, ObamaCare is not a punch line, it is a lifeline. For millions of Americans, the Affordable Care Act is the only option to access quality health care at an affordable price. I have indicated that 600,000 uninsured Nevadans who are eligible to purchase insurance from Nevada's Health Link beginning tomorrow.

ObamaCare means access to affordable doctors and hospital stays, prescription drugs, and more. Uninsured Nevadans will have access to good insurance plans that cost as little as \$100 a month. In fact, many Nevadans will get quality coverage for less than they pay for their monthly cell phone bill. Republicans would rip that lifeline away.

Republicans want to return to the days when insurance companies could discriminate against women. Why? Because they are women. I am not making that up. That is the way it was. That is how it was before ObamaCare.

Republicans want to return to the days when insurance companies could deny care because of preexisting conditions, like diabetes, epilepsy, and breast cancer. Even acne was a pre-existing condition. Again, I am not making this up. That is the way it was before ObamaCare.

Congresswoman DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, she is a breast cancer survivor. Sunday, I saw her say on the House floor that Republicans are trying to “make sure that every single day . . . each of us who survived cancer or another life-threatening illness . . . stay living in fear for an insurance company to boot you off your insurance.”

That is what it would do. I am not making this up. That is the way it was before ObamaCare. They want to return to the days when even children could be denied lifesaving coverage because they were born with a heart murmur or some other disability. Again, I am not making this up. That was the way it was before ObamaCare.

They want to return to the days when insurance companies could overcharge you when you were well and drop your policy when you were sick. That is the way it was. I am not making it up. That is the way it was before ObamaCare.

Because of the Affordable Care Act, millions of seniors are saving money on prescription drugs. No one can dispute that. The doughnut hole is being filled. That is all because of the Affordable Care Act. Millions of seniors are saving money on prescription drugs and many other things. Seniors today at no cost can go get a wellness check. They could never do that before.

Millions of young people are staying on their parents' insurance. Does the presiding officer know how important that is? I will tell you how important it is. In the little town of Searchlight where I am from, a woman who was assistant postmaster retired and her husband retired. They have a son Jeff. He is going to school. He was going to school at a community college. He had to go off his parents' insurance when he turned 23.

Within a few weeks of his turning 23, he was sick. He did not know what was wrong. But he went to the doctor. He had testicular cancer. He had to interrupt his education. He had three surgeries, and his parents struggled to pay for that. They are not people of means. One doctor friend of mine did one of the surgeries for nothing. But other people did not have the benefit of my being able to help them or parents like his who struggled to take care of their son. That is why more of that will not happen. Again, the Jeff Hill story, I am not making it up. That is the way it was before ObamaCare.

Because of the Affordable Care Act millions of seniors are saving money. That is the way it is. I have said that. Millions of young people are staying on their parents' insurance, and hundreds of thousands of businesses that already

offer their employees health insurance are getting tax credits for doing the right thing.

But the Republicans want to turn back the clock on all of these benefits and more. They want to force more than 25 million families to once again rely on crowded, expensive emergency rooms or go without the lifesaving care they need. Many of them go without that care.

That is how it was before ObamaCare. Unless Democrats agree to all of their demands, unless we agree to strip tens of millions of Americans of their health insurance and force tens of millions more to live in fear, they will shut down the government. That is where we are headed. Why do you think the Republicans came over here thinking by some reason we would not agree to fund the troops? They know that BOEHNER is going to shut down the government. The House of Representatives could have voted yesterday—they could vote today—to keep the government running.

But they are going to vote, I am sure, to shut it down. Many House Republicans have admitted that Speaker BOEHNER has the votes to pass a clean bill to keep the government open and functioning. Here is what Republican RAÚL LABRADOR from Idaho said. He said this on Meet the Press:

I am not willing to vote for a clean continuing resolution. But I think there are enough votes in the Republican party who are willing to do that. I think that is what you are going to see.

Republican Congressman CHARLIE DENT from Pennsylvania, here is what he said: “I am prepared to vote for a clean resolution tomorrow. . . .”

That is today. He said that yesterday.

It is time to govern. I don't intend to support the fool's errand—and it is a fool's errand. That is what he called it and that is what it is.

These reasonable Republicans are correct. The House easily could and should pass a clean continuing resolution today. All Speaker BOEHNER has to do is let every Member of the House of Representatives, Democrats and Republicans, all 435 of them vote on a clean CR, and it would pass big time. The Speaker has another opportunity to do the right thing.

This afternoon, the Senate voted to strip the hollow political ransom notes from the House. We rejected the House amendments. The House has what we passed. They have had it since last Friday. The Republicans will face the same choice tonight, this afternoon, or this evening, whenever they choose, as they did this weekend, to pass the Senate's clean bill to keep the government functioning or force a government shutdown. Democrats have already met Republicans in the middle and agreed to their lower funding level even though Republicans have refused to negotiate a responsible budget for more than 6 months.

Let's talk about what a lot of my Republican friends have talked about this

afternoon. They need more time to negotiate. Democrats have already met Republicans in the middle.

Senator MURRAY, the chairperson of our Budget Committee—because the Republicans said they wanted it and it was the right thing to do, and we acknowledged that, we passed a budget 6 months ago. Where are the Republicans in this 6 months, a half a year? Why couldn't we go to conference? Because they wouldn't let us.

What has happened and why they can't take yes for an answer is hard for me to understand. Our number was a lot higher than theirs. We took their lower number.

Senator MURRAY doesn't like it; Senator MIKULSKI doesn't like it. We took their lower number, 98. Why can't they take yes for an answer?

In addition, all these people who whine that we haven't done any negotiating—how many times has the President taken Republican Senators to dinner at the White House, this restaurant, and that restaurant?

What did he do? He put in writing what he was willing to do. Many of us were concerned that he had given far too much. We didn't like it, but that is what the President did because he wants a deal. He wants something big to help the government.

All of these meals that he paid for, have we gotten anything from the Republicans? Not a single sentence. Not a single sentence. They refused to put anything in writing.

Let's not talk about not negotiating. We have negotiated, negotiated, and negotiated. The last 2 weeks, we have had enough, and we are not going to negotiate. That is where we are.

For shrill Republicans in the House to demand more time to negotiate is simply ludicrous. I looked up today what ludicrous means. It means comically ridiculous. That is a good definition. When I put in ludicrous, I wasn't sure what it meant. I wanted to make sure I had the right word and I got it—comically ridiculous.

The President met with Republicans at the White House over dinner and other places. He has given a list of difficult cuts he is willing to make to reduce the deficit, but Republicans haven't reciprocated. They have never once put down in writing what they are willing to concede, not once. Democrats are through negotiating with ourselves. This is what it amounts to.

The fate of our country and our economy now rests with JOHN BOEHNER. Tonight we will see whether the Speaker is willing to shut down our government and risk our economic recovery to extract callous political concessions. I hope he makes a responsible decision. I doubt that he will, but I hope he does, and helps avert a government shutdown.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, it is no secret that the majority leader HARRY REID and I disagree on a great many

topics. Yet I rise today in praise of Senator REID. In particular, I wish to praise Senator REID for agreeing to pass the bill the House of Representatives passed at 12:30 in the morning yesterday that would fund our military.

For weeks President Obama and Senate Democrats have been threatening to hold in jeopardy the paychecks of the men and women of our military if there is a government shutdown. I commend the majority leader for agreeing to pass it, for not objecting, for not standing in the way.

For everyone who thinks that compromise is impossible in Washington, that working together is impossible in Washington, I would point to this as an example. That bill passed the House of Representatives unanimously. It came over to the Senate, and a few minutes ago we all saw it pass the Senate unanimously. It should be able to be on President Obama's desk for signature by tonight.

That is exactly as it should be. The soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who risk their lives defending our Nation should not have their paychecks held hostage to any potential government shutdown in Washington. I salute the majority leader for doing the right thing. I salute the Senate Democrats for not blocking the paychecks of the men and women in the military, taking them off the table and saying, regardless of what happens, we are going to pay our troops. That was the right thing to do.

I also note, for those who would like to see a resolution of this impasse, I, for one, don't wish to see a government shutdown. I think it is unfortunate that the majority leader seems bound and determined to force a government shutdown. In the course of the past several weeks we have seen the House of Representatives repeatedly attempt to compromise. In my view and the view of a great many Republicans is that ObamaCare is a disaster, a train wreck, a nightmare. Of those last two terms, the term train wreck comes from the Democratic Senator who was the lead author of ObamaCare. Nightmare is the term that was used by Teamsters president James Hoffa.

My view is we should repeal it in its entirety. I would note that was not my starting position on this debate. It was not the starting position of the House of Representatives. Instead, they started with the position that it should be defunded, which itself represented a compromise. The House of Representatives passed a bill to fund the entire Federal Government, every bit of it, except for ObamaCare and to defund ObamaCare.

They sent it over to the Senate and what did the majority leader, what did the Democrats do on a straight party-line vote? Every Democrat voted no, absolutely not. We reject it in its entirety. They voted, in effect, to force us into a shutdown.

The House of Representatives was not done with that. They came back at

12:30 in the morning late Saturday night, early Sunday morning and passed yet another continuing resolution that represented a second compromise where yet again the House said, we want to fund the government, we don't want to shut down, we want to keep government going. Instead of defunding, which is what the House preferred, the House instead said: Let's delay ObamaCare, let's delay it. President Obama has already delayed it for giant corporations. He has already exempted Members of Congress. Both of those actions were contrary to law.

The House of Representatives said let's delay it for ordinary families the same way it has been delayed for big companies. It shouldn't be the case that giant corporations get treated better by the Federal Government than hard-working American families.

That was a compromise, and it was a compromise even though the Senate under Majority Leader REID had not compromised at all and held an absolutist position. At 12:30 in the morning, early Sunday morning, the House voted on that.

Did the Senate come back yesterday? No, we did not. The majority leader could have called the Senate back. We should have called the Senate back. We were only 48 hours away from a government shutdown, but apparently the majority leader made the decision it was more important for Senators to be home on vacation, home playing golf, home doing anything but being here on the floor of the Senate doing the people's business.

Instead, many Senators came back today. We voted only a couple of hours ago and once again Majority Leader REID and every single Senate Democrat voted to shut down the government, responded to the House's second compromise—not with any discussion, any compromise, not with any middle ground, but simply said no.

The position of the Senate Democrats is absolutely not. Are we going to listen to the millions of young people coming out of schools who are not able to find jobs because of ObamaCare? The majority leader says no. Are we going to listen to the millions of single moms who are struggling to feed their kids and finding themselves forcibly put into 29 hours a week because of ObamaCare? The majority leader says no. Are we going to listen to millions of recent immigrants who are struggling to provide for their families and facing skyrocketing health insurance premiums? The majority leader says no. Are we going to listen to millions of retirees, people with disabilities, and spouses who are covered on their spouse's health insurance plans, all of whom are losing or at risk of losing their health insurance? The majority leader says no.

Instead, the majority leader shared with this body that I was—and I wrote this down—the “chief Senate rabble-rouser.” I am not entirely sure what that is. I wasn't aware that was an official designation.

I would note previously the majority leader from the floor of the Senate had described me as a “schoolyard bully.”

It is entirely the majority leader's prerogative if he views the way to carry out his job as engaging in personal insult and ad hominem attacks. I, for one, do not intend to reciprocate.

I note that what he seems most dismayed about is in the past 2 weeks the voices of the American people have begun to be heard in this body. In the past 2 weeks the voices of millions of Americans losing their health insurance, losing their jobs, being forced into part-time work, millions of Americans who are struggling, have begun to be heard. We have begun to make DC listen. Apparently, the voices from our constituents, from the men and women of America, apparently to the majority leader, constitute “rabble-rousing.” I have a different view of what our responsibility is.

I would also note that the majority leader told us only moments ago, “We have had enough. We are not going to negotiate.”

I find that quite remarkable because to date it has been the House of Representatives that has been negotiating, that has been compromising and has been trying to find a way to resolve this so we can keep the government running and at the same time answer millions of Americans who have been hurting. The answer from the majority leader over and over has been no, no, no, we will not compromise, we will not talk.

As the majority leader said, he hasn't compromised yet and he doesn't intend even to negotiate. This is unfortunate.

Mr. CORNYN. Would the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. CRUZ. I yield to the Senator from Texas for a question.

Mr. CORNYN. The Senator has described accurately the back-and-forth between the absolutist position the majority leader has taken that says nothing can change ObamaCare because apparently he thinks it is absolutely perfect—we shouldn't change a letter, even though, as the Senator pointed out, a number of ObamaCare's biggest advocates are now coming back and saying it is a nightmare. I think the Senator quoted Jimmy Hoffa as one of them.

But is the Senator aware, reportedly, the House is going to be voting later on today and be changing once again the continuing resolution and sending it back over here? This time the report is that they will vote to delay the individual mandate to make it match—as the Senator points out, the employer mandate that has already been unilaterally delayed by the President, in an act of lawlessness. Unfortunately, it is not an isolated event.

Then the Vitter language, which will overturn the Office of Personnel Management interpretation, which basically carves out Congress and congressional staff from the law that would apply to everyone else, strikes me as

another attempt by the House to enter into some negotiation.

Would the Senator care to venture a guess as to what sort of good-faith attempt by the House to keep negotiations open—what that will lead to? I would be interested in the Senator's observation about whether he believes, as I do, that Senator REID is marching toward a government shutdown. Nothing the House does, nothing the House passes will deter him from shutting down the Federal Government at midnight tonight.

Mr. CRUZ. I thank my friend, the senior Senator from Texas. I think he is exactly right. Indeed, the conduct of the majority leader, as it has recently been reported in the press, the majority leader advised President Obama do not even engage in conversations or negotiations with congressional leaders.

As the senior Senator from Texas observed, the House is repeatedly trying to solve this problem to keep the government funded and to do it in a way that responds to the millions of people who are hurting under ObamaCare.

The answer for the majority leader over and over and over has simply been, no, we will not talk, we will not negotiate, we will not compromise, we will not listen to the American people.

I am reminded of the old philosophical question: If a tree falls in the woods and no one is around to hear, does it make a noise?

Likewise, if the House endeavors to compromise responsibly, and the majority leader and the President refuse to participate at all, can you solve the problem?

Ultimately, the only way to solve the problem is for Washington to listen to the people. If Majority Leader REID insists on forcing a government shutdown, then we may face a government shutdown. I think that is an irresponsible course of action.

If the House of Representatives acts tonight, I believe this Senate should come back immediately and pass the continuing resolution, whatever the House passes. I don't know what it will be, but it will be yet another good-faith effort to keep the government running and to address the train wreck of a law that is ObamaCare, and I very much hope this body begins to listen to the people.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, we have listened to the people. I recall we had a Presidential election. We had two people running in a bad economy. Normally, the nonincumbent would win. That was a Republican. He ran on the platform: I will repeal ObamaCare if you elect me President. He was actually ahead in the polls when he started saying that, but we all know what happened—he lost disastrously. Did the American people speak? Yes, they spoke pretty clearly on that one.

Now, the other body has voted countless times to repeal the Affordable Care

Act. They all get out their press releases and talk about how they stand up against the Affordable Care Act as they vote to repeal it 40 times knowing it will go nowhere.

Wouldn't it make a lot more sense if the other body's leadership said: Look, we lost the Presidential election saying we were running on doing away with ObamaCare. The American people shut us down on that. We have become the butt of late-night jokes every time we vote like this.

Maybe it would help if their leadership said: Why don't we take 10 Republicans, 10 Democrats, and those folks can deliberate and suggest how we can make improvements to ObamaCare. If they have improvements, they can bring it back by June, and we can vote those specific improvements up or down. We have already shown that after 40 votes to repeal and a Presidential election, we are not going to get rid of it. If they have improvements, let's debate and vote on them. That would make some sense.

Or we could return to regular order and between now and the end of the year, we could vote up or down on every single appropriations bill so we are on record as voting yes or no.

Instead, we have a small group of extremists insisting on shutting down the Federal Government, putting their own political agenda ahead of the rest of the country, throwing people out of work, costing hundreds of billions and making the United States look like the laughing stock of the world. The obsession with defunding or delaying the Affordable Care Act, which will continue to be implemented in the event of a government shutdown, is out of touch and it poses serious threats for our economy and the well-being of thousands of hardworking Federal employees and those who rely on important government services.

Defunding or delaying the Affordable Care Act will do nothing to solve our fiscal troubles. In fact, some repeals sought by House Republicans will add \$30 billion to our national deficit. It is a shame that some members who claim to be concerned about wasteful spending are willing to throw away the billions of dollars that a government shutdown will cost, all simply to prevent access to affordable health care for Americans.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, will the Senator from Vermont yield for a question?

Mr. LEAHY. Of course I will yield to the Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. I would say to the Senator from Vermont, I just missed Senator CRUZ. I was rushing down from my office to ask the junior Senator from Texas a question, which I have asked him repeatedly. He has come to the floor and spoken at great length about why ObamaCare and the health care reform act is unnecessary for Americans. What I read is that 40 million Americans as of tomorrow will be able to shop on these insurance exchanges to buy their health insurance.

He has also spoken—as the other Senator from Texas did—about Members of Congress and their own health insurance. I have asked the junior Senator, Senator CRUZ of Texas, to tell us about his health insurance. He has told us he is not in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program. Since he is addressing the health insurance of millions of Americans, I think it is not unreasonable for him to disclose publicly what his health insurance is, how much he is paying for it, and how much the employer contribution is on his health insurance.

Mr. LEAHY. How much of a tax break he is getting on it.

Mr. DURBIN. It is a reasonable question. I am prepared to disclose that, and I think most Members are.

So I say to the Senator from Vermont, shutting down the government to keep the American people—40 million uninsured people—away from the opportunity under the Affordable Care Act is hardly the kind of work we want to be part of.

I thank the Senator from Vermont for his leadership on so many issues, and I thank him for coming here today in personal witness to the need for good medical care, even for Senators.

Mr. LEAHY. I thank my colleague.

The Senator from Illinois has heard me mention—and with pride—the time I was able to serve in law enforcement as a prosecutor. Well, I was talking to some police officers in Vermont this weekend. They were saying: What happens here in Vermont? Will the Department of Homeland Security discontinue the training it provides for state and local law enforcement?

As the other distinguished Senator from Vermont knows, in a small State such as ours, support from federal agencies for our law enforcement is extremely important. It is one of the reasons we are able to keep our crime rate down.

The Vermont Passport Agency provides spectacular passport services out of St. Albans, Vermont. What is going to happen? Oh, you have a dying relative abroad and you need your passport in a hurry? Sorry, we may not be able to get you your passport on time.

Members of Congress are elected to lead, not to play bumper-sticker politics. It erodes confidence to continue to bring government to the brink in every debate. There is too much in the country and around the world of tremendous importance that demands our attention.

Instead of helping Americans get back to work and stimulating the economy, House Republicans are intent on playing political games that do nothing but weaken America and harm Americans. When they showed they weren't willing to do anything, the stock market collapsed, just as it has the last 3 days. How many people have seen their savings for their children to go to college wiped out while they play political games? How many people have seen their retirement wiped out

while they play political games? It is wrong.

I hope those who have set this course will reconsider before more damage is done. Congress has a real opportunity to reject the slogans, the politicking, the influence of pressure groups, and show real leadership. It is what we have done in the past. We have to do that now and in the future. Stop this always voting for slogans. Let's debate the appropriations bills and vote for them or against them. Vote to repair those crumbling bridges or vote against doing it. Vote for that medical research in cancer or vote against it. Right now they are allowed to go home and say: I am on your side, whatever side you are on. No. It is damaging our economy, it is destroying our image abroad, and it is stopping everything from cancer research to the education of our children. And in a rural State such as mine, in Vermont, it is of extreme danger.

We have seen this before, in 1995 and 1996, when a handful of Republicans turned a looming debt limit crisis into a political standoff with President Clinton that led to a shutdown of the government for three weeks. It is now happening again, as some Republicans seek to gain political advantage over President Obama. Continuing operation of our government's responsibilities to its citizens is too important to be sacrificed for partisan political advantage.

The effect of a government shutdown on law enforcement operations is also significant. Agencies like the FBI are already strapped for resources due to sequestration and the general budget environment. According to the Washington Post, FBI Director James Comey learned from his field agents across the country that funding was so limited that agents were left unable to put gas in their cars and training for new recruits has ceased. Agents are unable to build anti-fraud cases at a time when incidents of mortgage and investment fraud are on the rise, and staffing constraints have meant fewer cases opened overall and slower hiring throughout the Bureau. The needless shutdown of the Federal government will only compound an already challenging situation and make the job of law enforcement more difficult.

According to the Department of Homeland Security's shutdown plan, staffing at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center will go from 1,074 employees to 61. This means that all training for Federal, state, local and tribal law enforcement officers will cease immediately. Last year, the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center trained nearly 70,000 people. The Department of Homeland Security would be compelled to reduce staffing at the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office from 115 employees to six. This office plays an important role coordinating nuclear detection efforts among Federal, state, local, and international governmental entities.

The partisan brinksmanship in 2011 that led to the downgrade of our national creditworthiness should be a cautionary tale that convinces all Americans that the risks of a government shutdown and ideological impasses to them, to interest rates, to financial markets, and to our household budgets are too great.

Madam President, I am privileged to be the President pro tempore of this Senate as the most senior Member here. I have seen Republicans and Democrats come together. Democrats are prepared to come together here. Where is the Republican leadership, as it has been in the past?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I wish to concur with much of what my colleague from Vermont just said. Clearly, in our small State a government shutdown will be devastating—devastating for many thousands of Federal employees. If a shutdown continues, it will be devastating for families who have kids in Head Start. If a shutdown continues, it will be devastating for seniors who are on the Meals On Wheels Program and for pregnant women and young mothers and their kids who are on the WIC Program. This is going to hit Vermont hard, and it is going to hit America hard, and this is something that should not be taking place.

This debate is not about the Affordable Care Act. That is something which should be debated. I think it can be improved. What this debate is about is blackmail and hostage-taking.

What my Republican colleagues—especially the rightwing extremists in the House—are upset about is not so much ObamaCare; what they are upset about is that they lost the election in November. President Obama won by some 5 million votes. They lost seats. The Republicans lost seats in the Senate and they lost some seats in the House.

What they are upset about is that they cannot legislatively accomplish what they want to through the normal legislative process. What legislation is about is the House passes a bill, the Senate passes a bill, they both get together, work on something, compromise, and then the President signs it. They do not have the support to do that, so what they have now concluded is the only way they can go forward is to say: If we don't get our way, if we don't shut down the government or kill ObamaCare or delay ObamaCare—that is the only game in town. That is all we are going to do. We can't do it the normal way.

So what they are doing is holding the Congress and the American people hostage. That is unacceptable. It is unacceptable not only in terms of the Affordable Care Act, but let's be very clear: If we were to succumb and agree to this type of blackmail, does anybody not believe that 2 weeks from now,

when the United States needs to pay its debts, we will be threatened and for the first time in the history of this country we will be in a situation where we may not be able to pay our debts, which economists tell us could lead not only to a major financial and economic crisis in this country, but it could impact the entire world.

So if we say: Hey, no problem, we are going to yield to your blackmail now, what do you think will happen in 2 weeks? They will be back then. And next year when we go through this process again, it may not be the Affordable Care Act, it may be Social Security. Many of our rightwing extremist Republicans want to end Social Security. If we go through this process and submit to this blackmail now, I certainly will not be surprised if a year from now this same group of people says: Hey, look, you are not going to have a budget unless we end Social Security or we end Medicare as we know it right now.

So I think submitting and allowing blackmail to take place is very bad public policy. If Republicans or anybody else wants to have a discussion about how we can improve the Affordable Care Act—and I certainly think we can because I think it is too complicated in many respects, I think it leaves many people still uninsured. We are the only country in the industrialized world that does not provide health care to all of our people as a right, and ObamaCare doesn't do that. So I want to see some improvements made in it, but let's do it in the normal legislative process, and let's not say that if we don't get our way, we are going to shut down the government; we are going to impact hundreds of thousands of Federal workers; we are going to impact many vulnerable people who are dependent on Federal programs.

Another point I wish to make is that we hear from some of our Republican colleagues that the world is about to come to an end because the Affordable Care Act will be implemented. But it is important to understand that many of these same arguments have been made in the past around the time or shortly after major pieces of legislation were passed which today are enormously popular.

Right now we have over 50 million people who benefit from Social Security. Social Security is an enormously important and popular program in this country. But let me take you back to April of 1935 when Social Security was just passed, and I will quote what some Republicans had to say about Social Security at that time.

April 19, 1935, Republican Congressman John Taber said this about Social Security:

Never in the history of the world has any measure been brought here so insidiously designed as to prevent business recovery, to enslave workers and to prevent any possibility of the employers providing work for people.

Ask most working people in Hawaii and in Vermont whether Social Security is enslaving them. I think they

would not understand what you are talking about because since its inception Social Security has been enormously successful in reducing the poverty rate among seniors.

But it was not only Congressman Taber in 1935. Here is what Republican Congressman James Wadsworth told the American people:

This bill opens the door and invites the entrance into the political field of a power so vast, so powerful as to threaten the integrity of our institutions and to pull the pillars of the temple down upon the heads of our descendants.

The world was just about coming to an end in 1935 because they passed Social Security.

Republican Senator Daniel Hastings in 1935 called Social Security “un-American” and told the American people that Social Security would “end the progress of a great country and bring its people to the level of the average European.”

I am not sure what that means but looks pretty scary.

On May 6, 1935, former President Herbert Hoover said:

As a matter of economic security alone, we can find it in our jails. The slaves had it. Our people are not ready to be turned into a national zoo, our citizens classified, labeled and directed by a form of self-approved keepers.

That is a former President of the United States on Social Security.

It is not widely known, but in 1936 the Republicans campaigned to repeal Social Security. That year the Republican nominee for President said that Social Security is unjust, unworkable, stupidly drafted, and wastefully financed. He called Social Security a fraud on the working man and a cruel hoax and said: We must repeal Social Security. The Republican Party has pledged to do this.

It has turned out not quite to be the case. It turned out that Social Security will probably go down in history as maybe the most important and successful program ever passed by the U.S. Congress, and it plays an enormous role in keeping seniors out of poverty, helps people with disabilities, helps widows and orphans. It has been enormously successful and enormously popular despite all of these cries about how it was going to destroy our Nation. Maybe we should learn something from these prophets of doom.

Furthermore, we have a similar situation regarding Medicare. In the fairly dysfunctional health care system we currently have today where so many people are uninsured, so many people have high copayments, so many people have high deductibles, and yet we end up spending almost twice as much per capita on health care as do the other industrialized nations with guaranteed health care to all of their people—in 1965 Congress passed Medicare. Today Medicare is a very popular program. Today nearly 50 million seniors are receiving guaranteed health care benefits through Medicare. But when Medicare

legislation was being debated in 1965, this is what some of the Republicans from Washington had to say. Remember, today Medicare is quite a popular program, generally regarded as a successful health care program for seniors.

On April 8, 1965, Republican Congressman Durward Hall had this to say about Medicare:

We cannot stand idly by now as the nation is urged to embark on an ill-conceived adventure in government medicine, the end of which no one can see and from which the patient is certain to be the ultimate sufferer.

I don't know where Mr. Hall is today, but I think if he were to ask the seniors throughout this country whether they are suffering from Medicare or whether they approve of Medicare, I think most of them would say they approve of Medicare.

In terms of the Medicare debate we had on July 8, 1965, Republican Senator Milward Simpson said this about Medicare:

This program could destroy private initiative for our aged to protect themselves with insurance against the cost of illness. . . . Presently, over 60 percent of our older citizens purchase hospital and medical insurance without Government assistance. This private effort would cease if government efforts were given to all older citizens.

In 1965 Congressman Joel Broyhill wrote:

Medicare would initiate what would ultimately become a Federal monopoly in regard to the financing and rendering of health care with respect to our aged to the detriment of endeavors of the private sector; this would impair the quality of health care, retard the advancement of medical science, and displace private insurance.

In 1961 Ronald Reagan warned that “Medicare will usher in Federal programs that will invade every area of freedom as we have known it in this country. If you don't speak out against Medicare, one of these days you and I are going to spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was like in America when men were free.”

On and on it goes.

So the point to be made is not that the Affordable Care Act does not have its share of problems—it does—and not that it will take some work to implement it—it will—but what we have heard from Republicans in the past whenever a major government initiative was introduced was constant doomsday discussion about how the world would collapse.

Let me conclude by getting back to my major point that, in fact, this debate really is not about the Affordable Care Act. We can argue about the Affordable Care Act. We can change the Affordable Care Act. All of that is certainly legitimate. What this debate is about is whether 20 or 30 extreme rightwing Members of the House of Representatives are able to hold our entire government hostage. Hundreds of thousands of Federal workers, many of whom are trying to bring up their families, are going to lose their paychecks, lose their jobs. People who are

going to be applying for Social Security, for Medicare, for veterans benefits will have that process significantly slowed down. Depending on how long the shutdown continues, if it takes place—and I certainly hope it doesn't—it will mean that Head Start centers will be closing and other important programs will not be available to the people who need them.

Once again, this is not a discussion about the Affordable Care Act. What this is about is whether a small number of Members of the House are able to use their position to blackmail the American people and the President and the Senate and say: If you do not do what we could not accomplish—what they could not accomplish legislatively—we are going to render terrible harm to our country.

Furthermore, as bad as the government shutdown may be—and I certainly hope it does not take place—what we are looking at in 2 weeks is something that may be even worse. If some get their way, for the first time in the history of the United States of America, we, the largest economy on Earth, may not pay our bills. That will certainly cause a huge eruption not only in our country but throughout the world in terms of markets, rising interest rates, and all kinds of terrible things.

Once again, their understanding of government is, well, I guess it is too bad we lost the election for the White House, we lost seats in this Senate, and we lost seats in the House. That is too bad, but we are still going to do what we want to do regardless of what the election was about.

We cannot allow that to happen because if we do, it is not going to stop now. It will continue and continue.

So my hope is that Speaker BOEHNER will do something he should do. He is not the Speaker of the Republican Party; he is the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives. I suspect very strongly that if he put the bill that we passed on the floor of the House, he would have virtually all Democrats and a number of Republicans voting for it, and a majority would say: We are not going to shut down the U.S. Government.

So my request to Speaker BOEHNER is let the people in his body—all of the people, not just Republicans—vote on what we passed here. If he does that, I suspect we will not see a government shutdown and we will have some common sense over there.

Madam President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, we have just a few hours, absent some

last-minute agreements on the continuing resolution, to a government shutdown. This is a manufactured crisis that we are imposing upon our country. Make no mistake about it, it will cause harm. People will be hurt by a government shutdown.

I am honored to represent the people of Maryland. We have one of the largest number of Federal workers on a per capita basis of any State in the Nation and I am proud of the work they do every day keeping our country safe, doing the important research into incredible life sciences, protecting our food supply, making sure people get their Social Security checks—the list goes on and on. These are men and women who are on the front lines of public service. At midnight they will be asked to have another sacrifice added to their public service.

These public workers have gone through a lot: 3 years of a pay freeze, fewer Federal workers to do more work, furloughs as a result of sequestration—in other words, they are not getting their full pay today. Now what will happen after midnight? Some will be asked to work and not be clear whether they will get a paycheck or when they will get their paycheck. Others will be furloughed not knowing if they will ever get paid for the time they are off.

This is unfair to our Federal workers once again. Our Federal workers want to show up at work, do their work, and get fair pay for what they do on behalf of their country. That is what each one of us wants. Yet once more they are going to be the victims of the fight we see taking place here on Capitol Hill, particularly among our Republican colleagues in the House.

This is going to hurt people of this country such as small business owners trying to get an SBA loan, finding out there is no one there to help them process that loan. That person's business cannot wait. Yet a government shutdown will jeopardize that person's ability to get badly needed capital for their business. It will affect people who are now entitled to get Medicare benefits or Social Security benefits or they may have some questions about it or veterans trying to get their veterans' benefits worked out. Those issues will be delayed as a result of a government shutdown.

Individuals who depend upon the basic research which will be done by government—slowed down or in some cases stopped as a result of a government shutdown. People will get hurt as a result of a government shutdown.

This is going to be wasteful for the taxpayers of this country. It will cost the country valuable resources which should be used to provide services to the people of this country. This is wasteful. It will hurt our economy. When people do not get a paycheck, they do not go to the local shops as they would otherwise; they do not travel as much. Our whole economy will suffer.

From a logical point of view, it is hard to understand why we have reached this point. Let me explain. This body passed what is known as a continuing resolution. That continuing resolution would keep government open until the middle of November. It did not represent one party or the other's view as to what that level should be. If anything, it represents the Republican view because the number we picked for continuing government is the number the Republicans thought was the right number. We did not take the number that was in the Senate-passed budget bill. So we have already made an accommodation in an effort to make sure we do not get into that budget fight as we keep government operating.

We passed that resolution, known as a clean CR, and sent it over to the House. We are told—you listen to the comments of Members on both sides of the aisle—it looks as though we have the votes to pass that on the House side. Yet the Speaker will not bring it up for a vote. He refuses to do that. Talk about democracy. We passed it here, looks like the votes are on the other side to pass it, the President is prepared to sign it, and government will not shut down in 7 hours, but there is no indication that the majority will prevail in the House of Representatives. Instead, a minority, with extreme views, is saying we are going to use this shutdown of government to try to advance our extreme agenda.

It gets us to what we have seen in other parts of history. This is not much different than some of the tactics that were deployed to try to prevent Medicare from coming into law, or Social Security from coming into law. The Republicans in the House who are trying to block ObamaCare are saying they do not want to see this happen. They say they are afraid of what will happen when ObamaCare becomes a reality. They are not afraid it will fail; they are afraid it will succeed. President Obama observed—and I happen to agree with him—regarding the naysayers on ObamaCare, the one thing he knows is in a few years when this program is successful, they will not call it ObamaCare.

I can talk about the merits or I can talk about the process. The merits of the Affordable Care Act—I am proud at last the United States, the wealthiest Nation in the world, is moving toward universal coverage so we can at long last say health care is a right, not a privilege. We are the only industrial Nation in the world that has yet to move in that direction.

I am proud we improved Medicare under the Affordable Care Act. Our seniors are seeing that coverage gap in Medicare prescription drugs closed. They are seeing preventive health care services now available without copayments. By the way, they are also seeing a Medicare trust fund that is solvent. The future looks much brighter than it did before the Affordable Care Act.

American families are happy they can keep their adult children on their insurance policies to age 26, and they are getting value for the dollar.

I hear these negative comments about ObamaCare. They are talking about how our health care system used to be. Talk to American families who saw every year their coverage erode and their premiums go up before we passed the Affordable Care Act. Under the Affordable Care Act, we see you are getting value for your dollar. The insurance company has to return 80 to 85 percent of your premium dollars in benefits. If not, you get a rebate. Millions of Americans have seen rebates because the insurance companies charged too much. They are getting money back. They are getting value for their dollar.

For affordability, of the people who will be able to enter the exchanges starting tomorrow—tomorrow they can enroll in the exchanges—three out of every four who are eligible to enroll in the exchanges will be entitled to some help. This is affordable coverage and it is good coverage—no lifetime caps; no preexisting conditions. You are getting solid insurance coverage for an affordable rate. That is what the Affordable Care Act is all about.

Small businesses, I have heard a lot about small businesses. If you have under 50 employees, there are no new mandates and at last you are able to get competitive products, insurance programs with a little variety. You can pick the plan that is best for you rather than being told by the insurance company this is all you can get, and there are larger pools so you don't have to worry about one of your employees getting sick and all of a sudden the premiums go up. That is the situation that is changing.

I can talk about the merits of what we are trying to do but that is not where we are. This is a process issue. There is a time and place to talk about how we can improve our health care system in this country, but in a few hours we are talking about whether government is going to stay open.

I can make a very strong argument that the reason we do not have a budget that starts October 1 is because of the obstructionist policies of the Republicans, particularly in the House. We have tried to go to conference. We passed our budget. They said we could not. We did. We passed a budget in the Senate. The House passed a budget. They were different. Would you think you go to conference? Republicans refused to go to conference. They refuse to go to conference. They refuse to negotiate a budget agreement. We are now up to October 1 and they will not agree to keep government open. I acknowledge it is not the majority, but there is an extreme element, particularly on the other side, that wants to see government shut down. They want to see government closed. That is what we are confronting, which is terribly irresponsible. It is affecting families, it is affecting our economy.

New York Magazine got this right. I don't normally quote from them:

The Republican party has spent 30 years careening ever more deeply into ideological extremism, but one of the novel developments of the Obama years is its embrace of procedural extremism. The Republican fringe has evolved from being politically shrewd proponents of radical policy changes to a gang of saboteurs who would rather stop government from functioning at all.

That is what we are up against. I think most Members of this body know that I believe in pragmatism. I believe we need to work together. I believe Democrats and Republicans need to come together and forge agreements to move the process forward. That is what I think the Framers of our Constitution envisioned, sitting around a table working out our differences. We have had divided government before. It is not new. We have gotten through those days. We have gotten through those days by listening to each other, sitting around the table and working out our problems.

But there are three things that are happening right now that need to end. No. 1, we have to keep government open; No. 2, we have to pay our bills and not be threatened in 2 weeks with the inability to pay our bills; No. 3, we have to get rid of these senseless, across-the-board, mindless cuts known as sequestration. We have to get rid of those three.

Yes, we do need a budget. That budget will not be what the Democrats want or the Republicans want. It has to be negotiated. It will contain, I hope, the best of what both parties can offer in dealing with the future needs of our country. That is what we should do, put America first. If we do that, we will help the people of our country.

I know we are just a few hours away from the shutdown of government. I still hold out hope that we will put the country's business first and stop playing this extremism politics of trying to say it is my way or no way. Let's keep government open. Let's pay our bills. Let's get rid of sequestration. Then let's negotiate a budget that allows this country to grow and unleashes our potential so that all Americans can enjoy the opportunity of this great land.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. KAINÉ. Madam President, I rise tonight—with the question of whether the House will allow government to continue or shut down—to actually talk for a few minutes about a simple concept but that is apparently difficult in this body, and that is compromise. I want to talk for a few minutes about compromise.

Based on the action that was taken by the Senate earlier today, the House has an opportunity to accept a compromise that the Senate has put before them. The CR bill the House drafted contained a budget number that was their number, not our number. We weren't wild about it, but we accepted it. And the question is: Will the House accept yes for an answer?

Over the weekend, I was traveling in Virginia—especially yesterday when the weather was great—to different events in central Virginia where there were big festivals, so people were gathering outside. As I traveled, I heard again and again: Don't shut down government and can't you find a compromise?

People are aware in Virginia, and in Hawaii I know they feel the same, that there can be severe consequences to a shutdown. I know the Senator from Maryland may have already offered a number of these thoughts. A great agency such as NASA that funds science and research will see furloughs of 97 percent of its employees. The Commerce Department, which is about commerce, our business and our economy, will see furloughs of 87 percent of its employees. The National Institutes of Health, dealing with research and other important health matters, will see furloughs of 73 percent of their employees. Even an agency such as Treasury—the core Treasury function, separate from the IRS—will see a reduction of their staff at 50 percent at a time when we need the Nation's fiscal system to be strong.

The consequences of shutdown are severe, and that is why the citizens of Virginia are saying: Don't shut the government down. Find compromise. It is not just employees either, and that is significant enough. It will affect tens of thousands of employees in Virginia and services people rely on. To pick one as an example, the number of VA employees who will be furloughed is actually fairly small as a percentage, but the people at the VA who will be furloughed are the folks who work at the VA Benefits' Administration, which is the organization within the VA that processes veterans' benefits claims.

If you are a veteran who has come home from Iraq or Afghanistan, and you have been part of a war that has now lasted for 12 or 13 years and you want to file for your benefits, which is something you are entitled to because you fought for the Nation—and we have heard the stories of the backlog in veterans' claims—you will be delayed even more because of the furlough. It is unfair to do this to our veterans. It is unfair to do this across government.

I said I wanted to talk about compromise because I think this is not even fundamentally a battle about the budget. It is not a battle about the Affordable Care Act. It is a battle about whether compromise is good or bad.

I don't know if anyone had a chance to read this, but there was a wonderful article in the Washington Post—an

opinion article on Friday, September 27—that was authored by a columnist of the Post, Michael Gerson. Michael was the former speechwriter for President Bush 43, George W. Bush. He worked in the Bush administration and wrote an excellent piece that was published, and I want to read a bit of it. The title of the piece is "A compromised reputation among the GOP." Again, it ran in The Washington Post last Friday. I will read a couple of quotes:

The real target—

Not the ACA, not the budget—

is the idea of compromise itself, along with all who deal, settle or blink.

In the middle of this unfolding Republican debate comes a timely National Affairs article by Jonathan Rauch. It is titled "Rescuing Compromise," but it might as well have been called "James Madison for Dummies."

Rauch argues that Madison—

I have to mention a Virginian in my speech—

had two purposes in mind as he designed the Constitution. The first was to set faction against faction as a brake on change and ambition—a role that tea-party leaders have fully embraced. Madison's second purpose, however, was "to build constant adjustment into the system itself, by requiring constant negotiation among shifting constellations of actors."

Following the Articles of Confederation, America's founders wanted a more energetic government. But they made action contingent upon bargaining among branches of government and within them. "Compromise, then, is not merely a necessary evil," argues Rauch, "it is a positive good, a balance wheel that keeps government moving forward instead of toppling."

Compromise, of course, can have good or bad outcomes. But an ideological opposition to the idea of compromise removes an essential cog in the machinery of constitutional order. "At the end of the day," says Rauch, "the Madisonian framework asks not that participants like compromising but that they do it—and, above all, that they recognize the legitimacy of a system that makes them do it."

Finally from the Gerson article:

It is a revealing irony that the harshest critics of compromise should call themselves constitutional conservatives. The Constitution itself resulted from an extraordinary series of compromises. And it created the system of government that presupposes the same spirit. "Compromise," says Rauch, "is the most essential principle of our constitutional system. Those who hammer out painful deals perform the hardest and, often, highest work of politics; they deserve, in general, respect for their willingness to constructively advance their ideals, not condemnation for treachery."

That is what this debate is about: Is compromise good or is it bad? We have to be willing to compromise.

I want to talk about what the Senate has been doing to advance the spirit of compromise. On the 23rd of March in this body—after a very late night—at 5 a.m. in the morning, the Senate passed the first Senate budget that we passed in 4 years. In that same week, the House passed a budget as well. We have talked about this often. Once that happens and the two budgets are passed,

there is a budget conference to sit down and try to find compromise between these two different documents.

These budgets passed more than 6 months ago, but there has been no budget conference. There has been no effort to find compromise. Why not? Because the Republicans—a tiny handful in the Senate and the majority in the House—do not want to compromise.

Senate Democrats have made a motion 18 times since March 23 to begin a budget conference, and in every one of those instances, a handful of Republican—and when I use the word handful, I am quoting the Senator from Utah who objected to a budget compromise and said “a handful of us object”—Members of this body, working together with House colleagues, have decided they do not want to put in motion the process for dialog and compromise.

The Senate Democrats were, are, and will be ready to sit down at a budget conference table to negotiate, listen, and compromise to find a budget going forward. We have tried 18 times. We will try it a 19th time. We will try it a 20th time. We will keep working to compromise.

We also compromised in the very matter of the bill that is pending before the body today. As the Presiding Officer knows, the continuing resolution bill was sent from the House over to the Senate last week. That is the way these bills start; they originate in the House. The bill had two components. The first component was “defund ObamaCare,” and the second was “and then we will fund government.”

The House bill said they would fund the government at their proposed budgetary number, which is \$986 billion in discretionary spending. That was their number; that was not our number. We had extensive discussions among Senators about what we thought of their proposal. Frankly, we thought the \$986 billion number was too low. It includes all of the sequester cuts we disagree with. We think the right number to the budget compromise should be \$1.05 trillion, not \$986 billion.

The Senate has a different idea about the number, but guess what. The Senate was willing to accept the House's number. We accepted the House's budget number out of the spirit of compromise, and we stripped away the “defund the Affordable Care Act” provision and said: Let's put that into a budget negotiation. In a budget negotiation, we can talk about that or anything else they want, but we won't tie it up with the threat of a government shutdown.

So we sent the budget bill back to the House at their budget number and said to them: Can't you take yes for an answer? They have proposed funding at \$986 billion. We do not agree with that number, but for purposes of the short-term CR, we will agree, out of the spirit of compromise: Can you take yes for an answer?

The Presiding Officer knows the answer. They would not take yes for an answer. They brought it back and added new provisions: the repeal of a tax that would increase the deficit, and a delay in the Affordable Care Act provisions that would provide maternity service to expecting mothers, that would protect adults from not getting insurance on the grounds of preexisting conditions, that would give a significant tax credit to small businesses to help them pay for insurance. They wanted to delay all of those provisions.

We have taken action again today. We have again made this bill what we call a clean spending bill. We have taken out anything other than what this bill was supposed to be: At what level should government be funded? We have gone back to the House and we said: We are accepting your proposal. We are accepting your number even though we have a different number we want to argue for, and we will save the other arguments for a budget conference if you will finally go to the table with us.

I want to conclude and say that James Madison was right, and not because he was a Virginian. He was just right to recognize that compromise is the essential element of our system. Think about it for a minute. If you set up a government, you have three different branches. The legislative branch has two Houses. You have to find compromise between the two Houses to move forward.

The Supreme Court in the judiciary has nine Justices. They have to work together and find a compromise, or a consensus, by a majority on any case.

Even the President's power, which is unilateral so it seems as though it is not a compromise branch because we put the executive powers in the President's hands. How do we choose the President? We choose the President through the fundamental constitutional compromise of the electoral college. So the choice of a President is based on compromise.

The entire constitutional system we have requires compromise. The Senate was willing to compromise and go to a budget resolution, and we have been blocked by the House. The Senate was willing to compromise and accept the House's budget number and they have not been willing to say yes even to their own budget number.

We stand here tonight at 5:27 p.m. ready to compromise, and we will be ready the next hour to compromise. We will be ready to compromise and find a deal to keep this government open every minute, every second, from now until we get this right. But we do feel very strongly that no one should threaten to shut down the government of the United States.

If a foreign enemy threatened to shut us down, we would unify, as we have so many times, to repel that threat. But we are allowing elected Members of Congress to threaten to shut down this body, the government of the greatest

Nation on Earth? It is unfathomable to me. The only way I understand it is in exactly the terms Michael Gerson indicated in the Washington Post. This is not fundamentally about the Affordable Care Act or a debate about the budget. It is a fundamentally an attack by some upon the very notion of compromise that is at the core of our system of constitutional government.

I stand on behalf of Virginians—and I don't think Virginians are different from the rest of America—by saying we have to be willing to compromise to find the common good. It is my hope that the House, when they act tonight, will act in the spirit of compromise and the common good and allow this government to remain open.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. VITTER. Madam President, I rise again to urge both the House and this body to pass into law what should be the rule and the law for everything we do in Washington; that is, to apply the same rules to Washington as are applied to the rest of America, across the board, certainly including ObamaCare. Of course, what I am talking about is ending the special Washington exemption from ObamaCare.

That exemption is moving forward under what I consider a clearly illegal rule issued by the Obama administration. It is illegal because it is contrary to the statute, contrary to the clear language, contrary to the clear intent of an ObamaCare provision that says every Member of Congress and all congressional staff need to be treated the same as the millions of other Americans who are going to the so-called exchanges for their health care; 8 million, against their will, losing their previous employer-provided subsidy.

Let me recount briefly the history of this because it is important. Several years ago during the ObamaCare debate there was a proposal made by many, including myself and one of the leaders was Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY of Iowa, and that proposal was actually adopted, amazingly, to my pleasant surprise at the time, and put in the ObamaCare bill. It said just what I mentioned a few minutes ago: Every Member of Congress and all congressional staff need to go to the so-called exchanges for their health care. They need to leave our present Federal Employee Health Benefit Plan which includes our employer-provided subsidy. The idea was simple, and it was a good one, so that we would actually walk in the shoes of other Americans who are living under the challenges and the burdens of this law, including having to get our health care in the exchanges

with no special deal, no special subsidy, no special exemption.

That law was passed as part of ObamaCare, pure and simple, exactly those words.

I guess this is an example of what NANCY PELOSI said: We need to pass the law in order to figure out what is in it. Because after the law passed, with that language in it, lots of folks on Capitol Hill started reading that and they said, Oh, you-know-what; we can't stand for this, we can't live by that. We can't be subject to the same situation as other Americans. So there was furious scheming and gnashing of teeth about how we are going to get out of this burden, even though there was very little broad-based discussion about how we are going to get all of Americans out of that burden they were subjected to.

That developed into furious lobbying of the Obama administration. Many folks in the Senate, led by the distinguished majority leader HARRY REID said: Mr. President, you need to issue a special rule that exempts Congress, that takes the pain out of that provision—a special, unique, special rule, special bailout for Congress. Sure enough, that is what the Obama administration did, conveniently right after we left town for the August recess, right after Congress got away from the scene of the crime.

According to numerous press reports that are not rebutted, President Obama personally got involved. He personally had discussions within his administration, at the urging of HARRY REID and others, and he ensured that this special rule was issued. It does two things, basically. No. 1, it says that even though the ObamaCare statute states plainly and clearly that every Member of Congress and all official congressional staff have to go to the exchanges, we don't know what official staff is, so we are going to leave that up to each individual Member of Congress, and we are not going to second-guess that. So any individual Member of Congress can say certain folks aren't covered by that mandate. They can stay in their current plan. They don't have to be disrupted. In theory, a Member of Congress can say nobody on my staff is part of that official staff for purposes of this mandate. That is silly and ridiculous on its face because the statute is clear.

The second thing this illegal rule does is it says that for Members and any staff who do go to the exchange—what is supposed to be the fallback position for Americans and for Congress—for Members and staff who do go to the exchange, they get to take their very generous taxpayer-funded subsidy with them, even though that is not available to any other person losing employer-based coverage and who is going to the exchange against his or her will. So that deal isn't available to anyone but the select ruling class.

That is why I think this rule is completely illegal, and that is why I know it flies in the face of what I consider

the first most basic rule of democracy; that laws passed by Congress, by Washington, should be applied to Washington the same as they are applied to America. That should be true in ObamaCare. That should be true across the board.

To react to this illegal Obama administration rule, I joined with many colleagues in the Senate—and I wish to thank all of my cosponsors, including Senator ENZI, Senator HELLER, and several others—I am forgetting the entire list—and Members of the House who have identical legislation and identical language. They are led by Congressman RON DESANTIS of Florida. RON JOHNSON is another colleague I was trying to think of from Wisconsin who is another leading coauthor. I wish to thank all of them for leading this fight.

Our language does two simple things. First of all, it negates this illegal Obama administration rule that is a special exemption, a special bailout for Congress against the clear language and intent of ObamaCare. Secondly, it broadens that rule and also applies it to the President and the Vice President and all of their political appointees.

That is the "no Washington exemption" language. That is the Vitter amendment in the Senate, with many other cosponsors. That is the DeSantis amendment in the House, with many House cosponsors. I urge all of my colleagues to come together around that commonsense, fair language, which again simply ensures what I think should be rule No. 1 of our American democracy: Whatever Congress passes for America, it applies equally to itself; whatever Washington imposes on America, it applies equally to Washington, to policymakers in Washington.

We are making progress because there are reports that the House may very well take up this exact language tonight as part of the continuing discussion about a spending bill, and I urge the House to do that, to stand with the American people—not to stand with Washington but to stand tall with the American people—and say, yes, it should be that even playing field, and whatever is passed on America should be applied equally in the same way. No special deals or exemptions or subsidies should be applied to Washington.

I urge all of my colleagues here, Republicans and Democrats, to support that effort, to support that simple, basic, fair language, to support it on ObamaCare, to support it across the board because it is essential that what Washington passes on America is applied with equal force and effect on Washington. If we did that under ObamaCare, I am convinced we would rush with greater determination, speed, and focus to fix the very real problems of ObamaCare because we would be vested in it. If we did that on other laws, I am convinced it would have the same positive effect. Let's do

it, No. 1, because it is fair and right; and No. 2, because our personal interests should be completely aligned, should be the same as those of the American people, and that will get us to act. That will get us to fix things. That will get us to fight in the right direction, Republicans and Democrats together.

Again, I urge support of this new Washington exemption language. I urge the House to vote positively on that tonight. I urge the Senate to accept that fundamental principle, that important language, which, as I said, I think is the first core rule of democracy.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the time for morning business with debate only be extended until 8 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and that the majority leader be recognized at 8 p.m.

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

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, I come to the floor today in a state of disbelief. With millions of people out of work, with an economic recovery still far too fragile, with students and families being crushed by student loan debt, with millions of seniors denied their chance at one hot meal a day, with Meals On Wheels, and millions of little children pushed out of Head Start because of a sequester, with the country hours away from a government shutdown and days away from a potential default on the Nation's debt, the Republicans have decided that the single most important issue facing our Nation is to change the law so employers can deny women access to birth control coverage.

In fact, letting employers decide whether women can get birth control covered on their insurance plans is so important that the Republicans are willing to shutter the government and potentially tank the economy, over whether women can get access to birth control in the year 2013,—not the year 1913, the year 2013.

I have a daughter and I have granddaughters, and I will never vote to let a group of backward-looking ideologues cut women's access to birth control. We have lived in that world and we are not going back—not ever.

This assault on birth control is just one more piece of an ongoing Republican assault on the orderly functioning of our government and the orderly functioning of our economy. In effect, the Republicans are trying to take the government and the economy hostage, threatening serious damage to both unless the President agrees to gut the Affordable Care Act.

This assault is utterly bizarre. Congress passed the Affordable Care Act to solve real, honest-to-God problems. Our health care system is broken. Forty-eight million people in this country had no health insurance. Women couldn't get access to cancer screenings. People with diabetes were denied health insurance because of a preexisting condition. People with cancer hit the caps on health insurance spending. Health care spending in this country was growing way too fast. So we worked hard. We compromised. We came up with a solution—a solution that will substantially improve the lives of millions of Americans—because that is the way democracy works.

It is time to end the debate about whether the Affordable Care Act should exist and whether it should be funded. Congress voted for this law. President Obama signed this law. The Supreme Court upheld this law. The President ran for reelection on this law. In fact, his opponent said he would repeal it and his opponent lost by 5 million votes.

I see things such as this and I wonder what alternate reality some of my colleagues are living in. So let me be very clear about what is happening in the real world. The ACA is the law of the land. Millions of people are counting on it—people who need health care coverage, people who need insurance policies that do not disappear just when they are their sickest. Women will get insurance coverage for birth control. The law is here to stay, and it will stay. Earlier today the Senate emphasized that reality by flatly rejecting the Republicans' newest ransom note, just as we did last week.

We should be having a real debate about our budget because we have real problems to solve. Earlier this year automatic across-the-board cuts went into effect throughout the Federal Government. That is the sequester. The sequester hits American families where they live. During my visits to cities and towns across Massachusetts, I have heard from families, small business owners, and community development organizations—from the Berkshires to the Cape. They tell me what it is like trying to stay afloat with mindless, across-the-board spending cuts weighing them down.

More than a thousand employees at Westover Air Force Base and Barnes Air National Guard Base in western Massachusetts are facing furloughs. This fall, more than 2,000 Massachusetts kids could not get into Head Start because of cuts, and the Head Start Program in Billerica will close completely at the end of this year. Federal workers across our State stand to lose as much as 30 percent of their salaries. Every one of those losses will tighten family budgets. And when families make less money, they have less to spend with local merchants and less money to pay off bills and less money to save and less money to do all that keeps our economy humming.

In fact, the Congressional Budget Office says ending the sequester would add 900,000 jobs to the economy by the end of next year. Next time you think about someone you know who is looking for a job or who is working part time but hoping to get full-time work, think about the 900,000 jobs the sequester has destroyed.

Scientists and medical researchers in Massachusetts are also getting pounded by the sequester. They are working hard to expand our medical knowledge and develop new cures for devastating diseases. They are working on discoveries that will help us in ways we cannot even imagine. Yet here we are, bluntly hacking away at their funding, delaying their research, and cutting off promising new work before it even starts—not because we have to, not because it is inevitable, but because Washington has its priorities all wrong, and it is making some truly terrible decisions.

Consider the Framingham Heart Study. It is a generations-long study of the causes of heart disease, a study that has helped create groundbreaking advancements in medical knowledge. There are people across this country who are alive today in part because of the work that began with this study. This study continues to yield extraordinary results, but it is scheduled to lose 40 percent of its funding—40 percent. Next time you think of someone you love who has heart trouble, think about the sequester cutting one of the world premier heart research programs.

Senate Democrats have put forward alternatives that would adequately fund the government while also addressing our budget deficits. Back in March the Senate passed a budget that would have ended the sequester. It was not easy. We had to make some compromises. No one loved everything in the final bill, but we debated it and we passed it. This is what Congress is supposed to do. But after we did all of that, Senate Republicans decided to filibuster the budget again and blocked us from going to conference with the House on the final bill. That is just pure obstruction, plain and simple.

In July the Senate attempted to pass the first of several appropriations bills to keep the government open and to end the sequester. We had a bipartisan Transportation and Housing bill that would have helped repair crumbling roads and bridges in our communities. It would have created more jobs, and it would have rolled back sequestration in these programs. But, once again, Senate Republicans filibustered and blocked that bill.

Now we are just hours from the government running out of money. We have not fixed the sequester because of all the obstruction. We have not finished a budget because of all the obstruction. We have not even passed a single appropriations bill because of all the obstruction.

The least we can do—the bare minimum we can do—would be to pass a

continuing resolution to keep the doors open and the lights on. We can ensure that over a million Federal workers are not simply sent home for no reason. We can avoid a government shutdown. But the Republicans have refused to do even that. They have continued to threaten to shutter the government unless the President agrees to gut the Affordable Care Act. The Senate rejected that position twice. Yet the Republican response has been to continue to threaten to shut down the government.

These threats may continue, but they are not working, and they will never work because this is democracy, and in a democracy hostage tactics are the last resort for those who cannot win their fights through elections, cannot win their fights in Congress, cannot win their fights for the Presidency, and cannot win their fights in the courts. For this rightwing minority, hostage taking is all they have left—a last gasp for those who cannot cope with the realities of our democracy.

The time has come for those legislators who cannot cope with the reality of our democracy to get out of the way so that those of us in both parties who understand the American people sent us here to work for them can get back to work solving real problems faced by the American people. We have real work to do, and that is what we should be doing.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I urge leadership in the House of Representatives to simply schedule a vote on the Senate-passed bill. I understand a number of people in the majority party are going to vote no. I also believe that—and the Presiding Officer used to be in the House of Representatives, as I was years ago. It is a democratic House, and I mean “democratic” with a small “d.” They should schedule a vote. I believe a majority of Members of the House of Representatives would vote for the bipartisan continuing resolution that passed the Senate. I believe they would pass it in the House if the Speaker of the House would let it come to a vote.

Is the Speaker of the House going to be the Speaker of the radical right of the Republican Party or is he going to be the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives? Fundamentally, that is the question. Is he going to be the Speaker of the radical right in the House of Representatives or is he going to be the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives? If he chooses the latter, if he chooses before midnight, there will not be a government shutdown because a majority of the House

of Representatives—not necessarily a majority of the Republicans, but a majority of those who took the oath of office on January 3, 2013, who were elected in November of 2012, and then took that oath—I believe a majority of them will support it.

I think it is always a good idea to look back in time a little to what happened in the past. We know that more than 30 times when President Reagan was President and President Bush Senior was President and President Bush Junior was President, the Congress raised the debt ceiling, even with a Democratic Congress, without preconditions, without threatening to shut the government down or without threatening default; and a number of times the same situation on continuing resolutions, passing budgets, all those things.

But never really before in the House of Representatives or the Senate has there been a body of Members who have tried repeatedly to have their way to, in a sense, attach their political platform from the election of the year before to a continuing resolution, and if they do not get that political platform attached, they are simply going to shut the government down. That is really what is happening.

There is all this talk about that the public does not like the Affordable Care Act. Some call it ObamaCare. The official name is the Affordable Care Act. There is some talk from the House of Representatives, really ad nauseam, that they do not like the Affordable Care Act and they say the public does not like the Affordable Care Act. But let's look at that.

(Mr. DONNELLY assumed the Chair.)

In 2012, the President of the United States was reelected—a strong supporter of the Affordable Care Act.

In 2012, supporters of the Affordable Care Act were elected, including the new Presiding Officer, who replaced the Senator from Hawaii, who is a supporter of the Affordable Care Act. I was reelected—a supporter of the Affordable Care Act. A strong majority in the Senate support the Affordable Care Act, many of whom stood for reelection and were successful. In fact, two more were elected this time who held office prior to this election and who supported the Affordable Care Act. More people voted for House candidates who supported the Affordable Care Act. More people voted for Democrats in the House races than Republicans, even though redistricting made the outcome a little different, obviously, from that.

So the point is, there is no public sentiment to shut the government down in order to defund or repeal or hold back or delay or emasculate or pull apart—or whatever—the Affordable Care Act.

But let's go back a bit in history.

In July 1965—48 years and a couple months ago—President Johnson signed Medicare into law. It passed bipartisanship, although a number of Republicans were strongly against it, es-

pecially the far right. In 1965, when Medicare passed, the John Birch Society did not like it. That was sort of the tea party of today. A lot of doctors did not like it. A lot of insurance companies did not like it in 1965. But a lot of people who were suspicious of government overall said they did not like it and opposed it, and a lot of them continued to oppose it after the election.

But 5 years later, the country clearly was very happy with Medicare. Certainly 48 years later, the country is very happy with Medicare. I do not think there is much question that 5 years from now people will be happy with the Affordable Care Act. They know it will have worked for people in this country. Much of it already has worked, as the Presiding Officer knows.

In my State, almost a million seniors have already received benefits. They have gotten free preventive care with no copays, no deductibles. Seniors from Youngstown and Toledo have had screenings for osteoporosis and physicals and all and there is no copay or deductible for those living on Medicare. People from Cleveland to Cincinnati, people in their twenties—100,000 Ohioans in their twenties—have been able to go on their parents' health care plan up until the age of 26. Because of a rule in the Affordable Care Act, we have seen thousands of Ohioans get a rebate check from the insurance companies because the insurance companies charged too much.

We know a lot of those benefits have been out there. Families who have a child with a preexisting condition are no longer being denied coverage because of the Affordable Care Act. So we know much of it has taken effect and much of it has been to the public benefit. We also know come tomorrow, October 1, much more of the Affordable Care Act—the rest of it—will be rolled out.

Seniors have saved in my State—and I think in the State of Indiana—an average of about \$700. Those who are in the prescription drug plan have saved about that amount of money on their prescription drugs, again, because of the Affordable Care Act. We know that. Put that aside.

Let's simply ask the House of Representatives to bring this bill up. We know what happens if we do not. A shutdown would hurt the financing of more than 1,000 small businesses per week in my State—from Hamilton to Chillicothe, to Mansfield, to Ashtabula. The Small Business Administration in 2012 approved nearly 54,000 applications through their credit loans program, supporting over half a million jobs. A shutdown would stop the ability of the SBA to loan to small businesses through this program.

A shutdown would put 52,000 Ohio federal employees at risk of being out of work. Most of them would temporarily lose jobs. We know that is a drag on the economy. We know it would mean government services are not being rendered. It would mean those

tens of thousands of workers would not get paid. It would mean a stumbling, a faltering, a sputtering of our economic growth and the economic recovery, because people are not making the money and putting money back into the economy.

Senior citizens would be ineligible, if there is a shutdown, to apply for new Social Security benefits. The Social Security applications would not be taken as a result of Federal furloughs and service cuts. In 2012, more than 2.2 million Ohioans received—obviously many had been receiving for years—Social Security benefits.

All we ask is that the Speaker of the House do what one should do in a democracy. Let the elected representatives of Congress have the opportunity to vote. Give them the opportunity to vote yes or no on the Senate-passed, bipartisanly passed continuing resolution. Speaker BOEHNER needs to make a decision. Is he going to be the Speaker of the radical far right Republican party or is he going to be the Speaker of the House of Representatives? That choice is clear. Bring that bill to the floor. Let all 435 Members of the House of Representatives who were elected last November and sworn in in January have the opportunity to vote.

I think if they do, it will mean the President will sign the bill before midnight and keep this government operating. There is simply no reason for it, as we lurch from crisis to crisis, all created by a political agenda, that most of the people in this country have rejected at election time.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

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

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, we are here tonight in the Senate, hours away from a deadline which, if action is not taken on the House side, the other body, will lead to a government shutdown. Unfortunately, when I have been asked today by either constituents or reporters, and they ask: Is it less likely or more likely that there will be a shutdown, I have had to be honest and say: At least at this moment it seems more likely than less likely.

I think we have to examine not just how to try to resolve this in a way that makes sense, but also to remind ourselves how we got here. This is not the typical battle in Washington. We have had a lot of those. We should all try to work in a bipartisan fashion. But this one is unique in the sense that you have, on the one side, Democrats in Congress and across the country who

are united in an effort to continue the operations of the government and not have a government shutdown, even if we want to make a point, even if we want to make an argument about this or that policy.

We see a growing number of Republicans here in the Senate and across the country, and maybe even a few in the House, even in the last 24 hours or so, who are saying: Let's just get the government funded so we can move forward. We might be able to have a debate in the middle of November or somewhere down the road. But let's not hold up the operations of government or default on our obligations for the first time since 1789 in order to make an ideological point or a political point.

It is clear from the national data that Independents are on that side of the argument as well. So you have this consensus on one side, with Democrats, Independents, and Republicans, who say that we should not—in order to make a point about an issue, whether it is health care or the economy or whatever it is—we should not act in a way that would shut down the government to do that.

On the other side, you have the far right of the Republican party which not only believes that in order to make their point they are willing to allow the government to shut down, but they also have a determination to do that to the extent one wing of one party is really driving the train in that party. It happens to be the Republican Party.

So this is unusual. It is not the typical Democrat versus Republican debate. It started months ago when politicians who work in this town would go home to their State or their districts and make the point that, no matter what, they were going to argue that this is the moment where they should stop the health care bill. No matter what was in their way, they were going to continue to drive in that direction.

That is how we have gotten here. What happens if we go past the deadline and there is a shutdown of a few days or longer? Here is what some of the data show from some of the folks who are not in the Congress but who observe broader trends, especially economic trends.

Mark Zandi is Moody's chief economist. He is widely respected. I think people in both parties respect his opinion. According to him—and I am not quoting, I am just summarizing what he said—a shutdown lasting a few days would cost the economy 0.2 percent of GDP, while a longer shutdown could cost as much as 1.4 percent.

Sometimes it is difficult to say what 0.2 percent of GDP means. What it means for sure is the economy, which has been moving in the right direction—we have had tremendous job growth, over 9 quarters now, and many months of job growth. But we are not moving fast enough. We are not creating jobs at a fast enough pace.

When I go home to Pennsylvania people do not say to me: Score every point

you can for your point of view. They say to me: Work together with the other side to create jobs. Work together with the other side to put in place strategies that will lead to economic growth and to job growth.

If you are going to go in the wrong direction when it comes to growth, and you lose 0.2 percent of growth, and then, if the shutdown goes longer you lose 0.4 or 0.5 or 0.6, over time you are going in the wrong direction. But we know when you lose even 0.2 percent of growth you are killing jobs. So first and foremost, any shutdown is a big job killer. A default on our obligations would be a much bigger job killer.

A shutdown would not just slow growth, but it would spread anxiety. This is just human nature. It will spread anxiety among consumers. We know that in the summer of 2011 the almost default on our obligations caused consumer confidence to take a nosedive. We did not come out of that hole of consumer confidence until many months later. A government shutdown has a similar effect.

How about the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, not usually on my side of a lot of debates or on the Democratic side? The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has urged Congress to keep the government open and has said that a shutdown would be "economically disruptive and create even more uncertainty in the U.S. economy." So this is the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which is often making arguments about uncertainty in other contexts. They are saying that a shutdown would create even more uncertainty.

How about the economic recovery? I mentioned those 9 quarters of growth we have had. We have had job growth as well. Just in terms of how you measure it: 7.5 million private sector jobs—7.5 million added in the last 42 months. That will take a nosedive. So instead of growing at 160,000 jobs a month, roughly, which has been kind of the pace for a while now, which is not fast enough—we need to be at 200,000 or 230,000 or 240,000 if we really want to say that the economy has taken off. But instead of growing at 160,000, 170,000, or even higher, we will go backwards. Maybe the job growth for the next couple of months will be substantially less than that. A shutdown all but ensures that to happen.

We don't know exactly how much slowing or how much damage would be done to the job growth, but there is going to be a job impact for sure, and I think that is pretty clear from the data.

Both sides in a lot of debates in Washington say they stand for small businesses. We can debate which side does a better job for small business. We know when a small business person needs some help, a measure of help from the Federal Government, they usually turn to the Small Business Administration. We know the SBA, their approval of applications for business loans guarantees and direct loans to

small business would cease. If we take the Small Business Administration off the playing field, they average about 1,000 loans or loan guarantees per week. That is national.

What does that mean for Pennsylvania?

From October 2012 through August of this year, 2013, the SBA supported over 1,400 loans for over \$600 million for small businesses in Pennsylvania. On average, that is about 30 loans for over \$13 million to entrepreneurs each week—every week, on average, based upon the recent data in Pennsylvania, 30 loans and \$13 million helping small businesses in Pennsylvania. To shut that off would make our economic circumstance even worse.

In Pennsylvania, we had many months in a row where the unemployment numbers were 500,000 people unemployed or more. Thankfully, it dipped below 500,000 for a couple of months. We just received the numbers from August because the State numbers are always behind. The State data for August unfortunately shows we are just above 500,000 people out of work. A shutdown will bring that 500,000-persons out-of-work number and send it higher and send it in the wrong direction.

What about veterans? People say veterans' disability checks would go out, just as Social Security checks would go out, in the aftermath of a shutdown. That is only part of the story. If you are a veteran getting disability checks or a pension benefit—in our State we have 109,000 veterans who receive disability or pension help. They may get their check, but it is highly likely, if not a certainty, that those checks will be delayed.

If you are a veteran and are entitled to this because of what you did for our country, because part of a political party wants to make an ideological point, you have to wait for your check. You have to wait for your disability check. That makes no sense. To say it is unfair to a veteran or to his or her family is an understatement.

What about Social Security? People say: Well, the checks are going to go out so people will be just fine in a shutdown.

That is only part of the story. Yes, current recipients will get their checks, but if you reach the age of 65 and you wish to have your application processed, you will not be able to do that or, at a minimum, that will be slowed substantially.

In our State, every month more than 11,600 people are able to start the process for Social Security benefits. Those people will have to wait and wait in the advent of a government shutdown.

What about national parks? We have a great blessing in our State where we have an abundance of national parks and historic sites which are wonderful for the country, wonderful for enrichment, learning, and history, but they also are a big economic driver in different communities.

In southeastern Pennsylvania, when you add it all, one of the numbers I saw was over \$200,000 of impact. Those, unlike a lot of others I spoke about, those parts of the government will stop completely. An economic engine in one part of our State that averages about \$200,000 of economic impact will stop. Maybe we will lose \$10,000 over the course of a shutdown. Maybe Pennsylvania will lose \$20,000 or \$30,000. We are going to lose for sure and a lot of other States will as well.

The Flight 93 National Memorial is one of those from 9/11 and Gettysburg and Valley Forge/Independence Visitor Center in Philadelphia, there are many examples and many job impacts when it comes to all of those.

The basic point is some people would say: Look, you are in the Senate or the House, and you wish to have a debate about something as significant and consequential to people's lives or to our economy such as health care, you ought to be able to debate that. I would agree with that. There is no question about it. We had big debates in 2009 leading up to a vote in the Senate. Then the debate continued in 2010. The bill was enacted in 2010. There was still debate about it after that. There were votes taken one after another to repeal it. Then the Supreme Court litigated it. That took months until the Supreme Court made a decision.

The Supreme Court, which is dominated—or at least the majority are Republican-appointed Justices—said the Affordable Care Act was constitutional. Then there was a Presidential election, which was another kind of litigation or debate. One candidate said: I am going to keep the Affordable Care Act in place, and we are not going to repeal it. The other side said: We are going to repeal it. The side that said they were going to put it into effect won the election—that of President Obama.

This has been debated and litigated several direct ways in several different branches of our government. That will continue and, frankly, it should continue. Some of the impacts are already in place. We know that.

We know, for example, that since 2010, when the consumer protections went into effect, which had nothing to do initially with those who were uninsured, the tens of millions of uninsured, but we put in place the consumer protections for those with insurance, those who had coverage, were making payments—premium payments—yet their children were still not protected because of a preexisting condition.

Up until 2010, it was the law—or it was the prevailing policy that if an insurance company wanted to say to those who were paying premiums, sorry, I know you are making your payments, but your child has a preexisting condition, and they are not covered, that was permitted when insurance companies had all of the power. I would argue they had all the

power, an unfair advantage and bargaining advantage. Since 2010, we have had something on the order of 17 million children who could no longer be denied coverage due to a preexisting condition, solely and completely because of the Affordable Care Act.

We have millions of young people who can stay on their parents' policies from the ages of 19 to 25. They can only stay on those policies solely because of the Affordable Care Act, because it was enacted into law.

We have millions of seniors who are getting payments over time to help them fill the coverage gap of the so-called doughnut hole. They are getting those payments solely because of the Affordable Care Act.

Tomorrow, we are going to see the beginning of the exchanges going up, where people can go into a marketplace and shop for the best possible health care insurance that they can afford. Most people—probably as many as 150 million Americans—already have coverage and their employer provides it, so their status will not change that much, if at all.

These changes are going into effect over time. I would hope the people who wish to keep debating it and making changes to it—and I voted for changes as well—would allow it to be, if not fully implemented, something close to fully over the next couple of months or maybe even over the next couple of years. Then at some point this debate about who is right or who is wrong about the impact will have been determined.

We are all for debate on the budget, health care, and everything else, but we shouldn't bring the country to these cliffs—the cliff meaning this deadline tonight on the budget, where the House has our legislation, which is only about the budget. They could pass it. It will pass if the Speaker puts it on the floor tonight. It would pass, and we would be beyond this crisis. Then we would move to the next deadline, get beyond these deadlines, have a big debate, and have very strong arguments made about how we get a full year's worth of a budget starting in the middle of November. That is the appropriate time and the appropriate place to make arguments about the budget, the economy, jobs, health care or whatever else it is. Now is not the time.

I would hope between now and midnight, the House would put up our bill, which is very simple—it keeps the government operating with no conditions and no add-ons—and pass that legislation. We would be done with this, and we could move on to issues people want us to work on.

I will restate what I said before. People in Pennsylvania, when they say to me what they want me to do, they say work together to create jobs. If you had to put that in a sound bite, that is what it is.

I am hoping between now and then this consensus of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents that prevailed

throughout the country will have the appropriate influence on those who are trying to push this to the end and shut down the government. A government shutdown is bad for everybody, no matter what party you are in. We should keep working to make sure it doesn't happen.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Earlier today the Senate rejected for the second time the House Republican continuing resolution. The approach they have adopted over in the House attempts to and would deprive millions of Americans of health insurance if it were passed here. It is not going to pass here.

I would say to Speaker BOEHNER we have given your proposal a vote. In fact, we have voted on it twice. Now you owe it to the American people to hold a vote, a vote on the bipartisan, clean continuing resolution which would keep the government open. This is the resolution which the Senate sent to you just a few hours ago.

The only thing preventing us from keeping this government open is Speaker BOEHNER's refusal to bring a bipartisan Senate continuing resolution to the House floor. I think most Republicans over there even acknowledge that it would pass if Speaker BOEHNER would allow a vote on it.

The Senate, a short time ago, approved a measure to allow for the pay of our men and women in uniform to continue in the event of a government shutdown. This measure was necessary because requiring our military to go into combat with only an IOU instead of pay would be a travesty. Nobody should be fooled. It is only one travesty that was avoided among many. Even if we restrict our view to the impact of a government shutdown on the military, there are many other terrible impacts of a government shutdown.

Our military Members would be paid so a shutdown would result in at least avoiding that problem. However, there are other unthinkable outcomes to our security with a government shutdown. Family members of military members who die in combat would not receive death benefits during a shutdown. It defies belief that in the pursuit of a narrow ideological goal House Republicans would prevent the payment of benefits for those who died defending our country. That is the result of a government shutdown.

In the event of a shutdown, the Department of Defense would also further reduce already curtailed training and bring routine maintenance to a halt, exacerbating the corrosive effects that sequestration is already having on military readiness. The Department of Defense would be barred from entering most new contracts. That would harm modernization programs.

A shutdown would severely curtail medical services for troops and their families. Commissaries would close, with hundreds of thousands of civilian

employees. Workers vital to our defense would be laid off. Outside of the DOD, a shutdown would disrupt some operations in the Department of Veterans Affairs which is providing benefits to those who have served.

Then there is the extraordinary disruption of having to plan for all of this absurdity. As Under Secretary of Defense Hale said on Friday:

Even if a lapse never occurs, the planning itself is disruptive. People are worrying right now about whether their paychecks are going to be delayed, rather than focusing fully on their mission. And while I can't quantify the time being spent to plan, it has or will consume a lot of senior management attention, probably thousands of hours in employee time better spent on supporting national security.

Again, that only covers the impact on our military and on our veterans. While Border Patrol agents and FBI agents would continue to work, they would be putting their lives on the line for an IOU instead for a paycheck. Health clinics would stop taking new patients. Lifesaving research would grind to a halt. The far-reaching effects of a shutdown on government services across the country should give us all pause, as should the fact that a shutdown is likely to damage the all-too-fragile economic recovery.

This has gone on for far too long and Speaker BOEHNER can end it now. There is still time for him to bring to the floor of the House of Representatives a clean continuing resolution and avert a government shutdown. For the good of our men and women in uniform and our national security, for the good of our economy, and for the millions of Americans who rely on and who benefit from important Federal programs, I hope the Speaker will allow our bipartisan continuing resolution to be voted on.

I hope that even this late in the game reason is going to prevail. I hold that hope in part because while House Republicans have put tea party ideology ahead of the good of the Nation, many of our Republican colleagues here in the Senate have not. These Members recognize there is a difference between on the one hand debating serious policy preferences and on the other hand threatening government shutdown if you don't get your way.

All of us in the Senate have issues on which we feel every bit as passionately as the opponents of the Affordable Care Act feel about that law. I happen to feel strongly, for instance, that we should have universal background checks for firearms purchases. By the tea party method of proving the strength of my belief, I should threaten a government shutdown if I don't get what I want on that subject. If all of us threaten legislative anarchy in pursuit of our goals, democracy will cease to function.

As appalled as I am that some Members would threaten such damage to our Nation, I am heartened that many of our Republican colleagues here in the Senate have spoken out in opposition to this approach.

When I came to the floor last week to speak on this topic, Senator AYOTTE was speaking. I commended her for saying that the American people expect us to keep the government running even though I disagreed with much of what she said about the Affordable Care Act.

I commend Senator COLLINS for saying a shutdown "will only further damage our struggling economy" and that we should resolve our differences "without resorting to constant brinkmanship and the threat of government shutdown." I commend Senator COLLINS, even though I disagree with her on the Affordable Care Act, for taking that position against a shutdown and for seeing the distinction between fighting hard for what you believe in and threatening to bring down government operations overall if you don't get what you want.

I commend Senator PORTMAN for saying that the differences on the Affordable Care Act "ought to be handled outside the context of a government shutdown."

I commend Senator CHAMBLISS for saying that while, in his words, he would love to defund ObamaCare, a government shutdown is "going to do great harm to the American people if we pursue that course."

I commend Senator KIRK for saying, "Let's not shut down the government just because you don't get everything you want."

There are others who have made that critically important distinction between opposing a certain policy and shutting down the government if one doesn't get his or her way.

I welcome spirited debate. I welcome differences of opinion. As my friend Senator MCCAIN said last week, there was plenty of both during the debate on the passage of the Affordable Care Act. But it is deeply distressing to hear Members of Congress argue that the litmus test of whether you are fighting for your beliefs is whether you are willing to shut down the government if you don't achieve a particular goal. That is more than fighting for your position, that is wanton destruction. I hope at least some House Republicans will come to see the difference between fighting for your goals and sowing anarchy in pursuit of them.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, moments ago the House of Representatives adopted a rule which clearly indicates that it is set to adopt a resolution containing unrelated conditions that will forestall its approval

by this Chamber. That is a tragic result which threatens harm and havoc to countless people who depend on government programs and to our economy. It threatens harm to veterans and children who depend on Head Start, seniors who receive meals, and it threatens jobs and economic growth with a ripple effect that will set all of us back in the continuing fragile and all-to-slow recovery we have seen from the greatest recession in recent memory.

Today's result in the House of Representatives is a tragedy for democracy. Without any overstatement, we have to recognize that this result reflects a dysfunction in democracy. The threatened shutdown of our government is the result of an extreme ideological fringe element in one House and one party that has made the decision that their agenda is a take-it-or-leave-it condition, that it is more important than economic growth, more important than our seniors, our children, our veterans. Key services, our economic growth, and jobs will be impacted very directly by this impending shutdown.

This morning I was at a gathering in Glastonbury, CT, with a group of manufacturers, their employees, and economic experts. One economic expert in particular, Steven Lanza of the University of Connecticut, told us that a shutdown of 3 to 4 weeks alone would cost the State of Connecticut 2,000 jobs.

We know from the predictions of expert economists such as Mark Zandi of Moody's Analytics that the result for the country as a whole could be percentage points of lost growth. In fact, we can ill-afford this self-inflicted, manufactured wound to our Nation and to the trust and confidence people deserve to have in our democracy and our economy.

For some businesses these problems will be more than acute; they will be life-threatening injuries because their existence—not to mention their profits—depends on consumer demand that will be diminished by the ripple effect and the ramifications of the 9,000 Federal employees in Connecticut who will be furloughed, not to mention the hundreds of others whose jobs will be threatened by a shutdown of just days or a week. The fact is that at this point we can't know what the full economic ramifications will be. There are more questions—serious questions—than there are answers.

I will support an amendment and a measure that will be offered I think later this evening or within hours to preserve the benefits and payments that are due to our veterans for their service and sacrifice. That is a provision we need to make. It is our responsibility to keep faith with those veterans and make sure we leave no veteran behind and that the processing of claims goes forward so our veterans receive the benefits they have earned.

At the forum I had this morning, Brian Montanari, the president of Habco, which is in Glastonbury, told us

he relies on contracts with the Federal Government for much of his business, and his employees—to whose ranks he has been adding—will be impacted by this potential shutdown, if only the uncertainty it creates. He is not alone. Businesses all over Connecticut and the country will face a tougher economic climate because of the shutdown. The Small Business Administration will stop processing applications for the business loans it provides to tens of thousands of entrepreneurs, risk takers, and job creators around the country. Perhaps the most galling aspect of this shutdown is the direct economic hardship it will cause to families whose jobs will be threatened and whose livelihoods will be at risk.

There are hours to go before the final hour, but the point is, as the President said so well earlier, keeping the government open is not a bargaining chip, it is our job. President Obama said: “You don’t get to extract a ransom for doing your job.”

Families need to be able to plan for their future, businesses need certainty in order to make investments and hire new workers, and the Nation needs both parties, not just one, to be fully committed to the democratic process.

I hope in the time remaining the House does its job, that these extremist demands are rejected—and certainly by this Chamber they will be. My hope is that we can move forward, keep the government open, provide the services people need, and support the economy, which is all too necessary at this point in our history.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the time for morning business, with debate only, be extended until 9:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and that the majority leader be recognized at 9:30 p.m.

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

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, let me speak for a moment about what we have happening. There is no reason for this happening, and there is absolutely no reason why, first of all, we could not have worked together to put a budget in place. We, months ago, passed a budget in the Senate and have been trying to go to a conference com-

mittee with the House so we could work it out and have a long-term budget that continues to bring down the debt. By the way, the deficit is coming down, which is very positive. But we know we need to continue to do more in a balanced way. That could be happening. It is not happening because the same people now who are putting us in a position where in a few hours there may very well be a government shutdown are the same ones who do not want to negotiate to get a budget for our country, which is very difficult to understand in terms of what the strategy is other than to just obstruct.

We are now in a situation where we have agreed to a compromise that would allow the continuation of funding of public services, from safety to health research, to what we do around education, innovation, small business. We have a whole range of things for 6 weeks. So we are talking about 6 weeks.

The compromise is that while we believe we ought to be reinvesting in education, in innovation, we ought to be creating jobs, rebuilding our roads and bridges and water and sewer systems, and doing a number of things that would strengthen our economy and create jobs, for this 6-week period, we agree to continue the funding level at the lower level the Republicans want.

So the continuing resolution we have sent to the House is a compromise by definition because we are willing for 6 weeks—while we negotiate a broader package on a full year’s appropriation—to continue funding at the level the Republicans have asked to be the spending level. By definition, certainly for many of us who believe we will not have a middle class—that we cannot grow the economy without doing the right kinds of investments and that we certainly should not be cutting back on cancer research and cutting clinical trials for women with breast cancer or cutting back on other possible cures, and that is happening right now at this lower level—but for 6 weeks we have said we are willing to compromise with the House Republicans in order to continue funding the government while the larger issues are worked out.

Instead of that happening, what we are seeing is a fight that, frankly, has been fought over and over. It was fought in the last election. It was very clear we had a President of the United States who ran on and who made a signature accomplishment of his first-term health care—access to affordable health insurance for all Americans—running against someone who said he would repeal that, and the President of the United States won with a substantial margin.

In the Senate, we had Democrats running against Republicans, with Republicans saying: Elect me and I will repeal ObamaCare; Democrats saying: No. We need health reform. We need to create a better, more competitive way to bring down health insurance rates—like in Massachusetts, the home of our

distinguished Presiding Officer. Our candidates—Democrats—won.

So I would suggest that in many places, and certainly across the country, with the President of the United States, the people of America spoke pretty strongly.

Now we are here. We all have seen the intensity of what is a minority opinion. I appreciate that. It is very intense. But it is a minority opinion in this country. So the minority of a minority is trying now to essentially slow down or stop the economy, hurt middle-class families, bring public services to a standstill because—even though they lost in the election, even though theirs is not the majority view—they have decided it does not matter—it does not matter—they are going to shut things down if they do not get their way.

What we are going to see tomorrow when healthcare.gov comes online are more competitive, lower rates for many Americans, young Americans, families, and so on, people who maybe could not get insurance in the past at all, moms-to-be who could not find maternity care—8 million women in this country who have not been able to find insurance companies that will cover them for maternity care because somehow being a woman was a “preexisting condition”—they are going to have a chance to do that, which means we will have more healthy moms, we will have more healthy babies, and this is good for our country.

We are seeing now in health reform that has already taken effect hundreds of dollars a year more in the pockets of senior citizens that they used to pay out for prescription drugs. But they do not have to do it anymore because we are closing this gap in coverage from the Medicare prescription drug bill.

As a caveat, let me say as somebody at the time 7 years ago who voted no on that Medicare prescription drug bill—because I believed and the majority on our side believed it was written way too much in favor of the drug companies as opposed to the seniors in terms of costs, not allowing Medicare to negotiate group rates and so on—when we lost that fight, we did not try to stop funding the implementation of Medicare prescription drugs, we did not do all of the antics that have been done. We said: OK, we lost that fight, so let’s make it work the best we can make it work, and we will fix it later.

We did not stop the funding for the educational efforts for seniors. We did not spend hundreds of millions or—I do not know, maybe it is billions now—trying to scare people, confuse people. We said: Let’s try to make it work. Even though in the May before the prescription drug bill took effect 21 percent of the public said they wanted it, they supported it, 7 years later, 90 percent of the public says they support it.

In health reform we were able to fix one of the things that many of us were concerned about then. Rather than

stopping the ability of seniors to get some help—even though it was not structured the way I would like to see it structured—rather than stopping that, we said: Let's make it work the best we can and look for opportunities to make it better.

Under the Affordable Care Act, we have made it better. We have made it better by closing the gap in coverage, which has been dubbed the doughnut hole, so that gradually under health reform this goes away, which will mean literally thousands of dollars in the pockets of many seniors.

I would suggest to our colleagues in the House and the minority of the minority here in the Senate who want to shut things down because they have not gotten their way on health reform that it would be so much better for the American people if they chose the path we did on Medicare prescription drugs, to try to make it work the best we can, and then to look for ways to make it better.

So instead of doing that, what we have is a situation where we are being held hostage—public services are being held hostage to eliminate something that, frankly, a majority of people already voted to say they wanted to put into place. Fix it, yes. If there are problems, yes, fix it. But they certainly do not want to go back to hundreds of dollars a month for a family for a policy that covers almost nothing, which is what has happened all across Michigan and all across the country.

This was a situation where women get discriminated against on the basis of gender, just because we are women or because we cannot find preventive care or we cannot find maternity care as women. We certainly do not want to go back to a situation where a family has a child who gets a serious illness and then suddenly finds, after spending hundreds of dollars a month on a policy that does not cover anything much, that there is a cap on how much care they can get for their child.

So they end up with thousands of dollars in out-of-pocket expenses, maybe going bankrupt, maybe losing their house, because even though they were paying for insurance, it did not cover what they needed. Then there is a limit on the number of treatments they can get. Oh, by the way, now that their child has a serious chronic illness, they cannot get insurance any more because the child has a preexisting condition.

This is the world in which tens of millions of families have been operating for way too long. We do not want to go back to that. I am certainly not going to be a party to going back to that. So we have said no. Negotiate on the budget. Be responsible. Focus on jobs. Move forward, yes. Take us back to a time of bankruptcy for families when there is an illness in the family? No. Take us back to a time when women were charged more than men just because we are women? No. Take us back to a time when seniors are pay-

ing more out of pocket for prescription drugs because of this gap in coverage? No.

We could go on and on. When we look at this whole approach, I do have to say given the fact that—we as women gain so much under health reform in terms of protection about unfair rates, getting preventive care without out-of-pocket expenses, access to maternity care, many women for the first time, so many other things.

A majority of those on Medicare are women. There are so many ways in which we benefit. We now see the House over and over sending us something that would delay or end health reform. Then today, on top of everything else, they have decided not only do what they want to stop the next stage of health reform, but they want to repeal what already is the law of the land now on preventive care for women, on family planning services, on mammograms, and all of the other preventive services that we know save lives.

The amendment that all of the Democratic women Senators offered under our leader, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, which made sure that going forward, preventive care would be available and affordable, no out-of-pocket costs, that was repealed in what was sent to us today. It is also interesting that preventive services for men were not repealed. Only preventive services for women, without out-of-pocket expenses.

We find ourselves now in a situation where we are waiting for the House to send back something else again that will chip away at health care and put in jeopardy the ability for the Federal Government in the greatest country in the world to be able to provide services tomorrow, whether it is safety, whether it is health, whether it is education, whether it is the basics, like traveling with your family and needing a passport or visiting one of our national parks or any number of other things that affect us, protecting the air and the water, and what we do to support our farmers and so on.

So that is where we are. We will once again indicate that we are willing to compromise on the budget issues. This is a budget issue. We will support the level of funding that the House says they want, not what we want, because it underfunds critical investments in services and hurts the middle class. But for 6 weeks, as a compromise, we are willing to operate the government at the level that they want. But we will not take the next step which is to take away the ability of millions of Americans to have access to basic health care.

Tomorrow is an important day for so many reasons. But one of them is that for the first time, citizens across the country are going to be able to begin to get the information they need from healthcare.gov about what is available for them and for their families in terms of new health care options.

From what we have seen so far, the rates are not only competitive but lower than was estimated they would be. In fact, for most families and most individuals, they are going to be able to get much more care. They are actually going to get something they are paying for. They are going to be able to receive that at much less cost than they currently can. So tomorrow is an important day, where as they say in Michigan "the rubber meets the road."

People will begin to find out for themselves, despite all of the stuff that has gone on for the last 3 years, all of the misinformation, the scare tactics, the millions of dollars in horrible ads that have been run, tomorrow, people will be able to judge for themselves.

We certainly expect it will take a while, just as it did for Medicare prescription drugs, for it to fully take effect. People will have 6 months the first time around to figure out what they want to do to be able to sign up for next year. If we find that there are things that need to be improved on, then we need to come together and do that. We are more than willing to do it. But we are not willing to go back to the day where families could not find any care for themselves or their families or could not afford it.

We, in fact, are the greatest country in the world, and health care is pretty basic for each and every one of us. We need to have a system, which begins tomorrow through private sector insurance and competition, to have a way to be able to lower costs for families while making sure they are actually getting the care that they are paying for. That is starting tomorrow.

I hope tomorrow, in addition to that starting, we are going to see a continuation of critical public services in our country and that we will send a message around the world that America really can get its act together, that this Congress can really work together and be responsible and not see the kind of incredible partisan games that have gone on, not by everyone but by a minority of the minority who are right now holding things hostage in this Congress. We can do better than that. I am looking forward to having the opportunity to work with colleagues on both sides of the aisle, in fact, to do that.

I am hopeful that the Speaker will just very simply put a continuing resolution on funding the government before the full body of the House of Representatives and let them vote. We have heard from many House colleagues today, Republican colleagues, saying that if they have an opportunity to vote on continuing the operations of government, they will do that, a clean CR, a continuing resolution that would allow the continuing functioning of services that the public depends on, and those who are providing as well are depending on.

The Speaker just simply needs to allow an up-or-down vote. Just allow a vote this evening. I believe if he does

that, he will see a bipartisan vote in the House of Representatives that will be responsible and do the right thing.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE FARM BILL

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, while I have a moment—I thought that there were others wishing to speak—since there are not, I wanted to take one more moment to speak about something else that is running out today that I am deeply involved in and deeply concerned about.

That is the 5-year agriculture, nutrition, and conservation policy of this country, the farm bill. We have seen the end today of the extension that was put in place last year because of House inaction. Starting tomorrow, we essentially begin to operate on fumes. We will see a time period in a few weeks when we will see the full impact of having no farm bill.

It is incredibly important that we use this time immediately to negotiate a final farm bill that will not only reduce the deficit, as our bill does by \$24 billion, but one that can get a straight bipartisan vote as we did here in the Senate with over two-thirds of the Senate twice voting for a comprehensive reform bill that addresses supporting our farmers and ranchers from a risk management standpoint, while eliminating subsidies that do not make sense from a taxpayer standpoint, strengthening crop insurance, strengthening conservation to protect our land, and air, and water, focusing on regional and local foods, farmers markets, small farmers, to support them as well, new jobs and bioenergy, as well as investing in rural communities all across America through our rural development efforts.

What we call the farm bill really is the rural economic development bill for the country. Some 16 million people work in this country because of agriculture. This is the biggest jobs bill we will pass. Our farmers and all of those impacted have been waiting and waiting and waiting and, frankly, have had enough. They want this to get done.

So I call on our House colleagues again to join with us to be able to finally get this passed into law. This is incredibly important for the economy, for small towns such as the one where I grew up in Clare, MI, all across Michigan, all across the country.

It is incredibly important for our efforts to continue to protect our soil and our forests and our air and our water and to be able to maintain the beautiful outdoors that we do and support for hunters and fishermen and

others that we do through efforts in the farm bill. It is incredibly important that this get done. It is long overdue.

So I couldn't let this evening go by without indicating that on the long list of things that have not been done, the September 30 date is incredibly important for rural America, for our farmers and ranchers who need help when they have a loss, for our families who need help when they have a loss, and for our ability to continue to grow jobs.

Our largest area of exports is in agriculture. It is a vibrant, important part of the economy. There is no excuse for this not having already been done. Again, too many games have been played attacking families who need help and choosing not to proceed in a reasonable, balanced way as we did in the Senate.

I am recommitting myself again, as I have day after day—and tomorrow—to making sure I do everything I possibly can. I call on House colleagues and on the Speaker to do everything they can in order to finally get a 5-year comprehensive food, farm, and jobs bill done so that we may continue to grow a very important part of the economy. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mrs. MURRAY. I know many of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle are deeply frustrated this evening. Once again, with only a few hours left on the clock, House Republican brinkmanship has us struggling to avoid burdening our families and our economy with more dysfunction and uncertainty. This pattern is simply unacceptable, and some of us, Democrats and Republicans, have been trying for months to break it.

When the Senate budget passed, I was hopeful that we could move to a bipartisan budget conference where Democrats and Republicans from the House and Senate could all come together, sit down, and try to work out our differences. Democrats tried to begin a budget conference 18 times. Many Senate Republicans agreed with us that we should continue negotiations and begin working toward that deal. Each time tea party Republicans and Republican leadership stood and said no. They made it very clear why: They believed they would have more leverage in a crisis—such as the one we are hours away from—than they had a few months ago when we were asking for orderly negotiations.

Instead of working on a bipartisan budget that would strengthen our economy, tea party Republicans began manufacturing this crisis to defund the Affordable Care Act.

This is a law, by the way, that is helping millions of Americans and beginning tomorrow, shutdown or no shutdown, is going to begin helping many more.

Due to Republican refusal to come to the table, we are now scrambling to avoid a shutdown.

I am confident the American people, including many in my home State, are looking at House Republicans and asking the same questions many of us are. They are asking: What are they thinking, and why would they hurt their own constituents simply to make a point?

Even if tea party Republicans don't want to admit it, a government shutdown wouldn't just impact people in Washington, DC, it would be felt across the country. In my home State of Washington, the impacts could be severe. First, Washington State is home to tens of thousands of Federal employees who will be furloughed or stop getting paid. It is also home to one of our Nation's largest veterans communities. The VA has confirmed this week that if the shutdown goes long enough, disability and GI benefits will stop for veterans in places such as Tacoma, Everett, and Spokane due to some tea party Republicans in Washington, DC, who can't have their way.

That is not all. If the tea party forces this government to shut down, our State's gorgeous national parks, such as Olympic National Park and Mount Rainier, will be closed to the public. Students at the University of Washington and Washington State University may not be able to access student loans to pay their tuition bills. Funds for important public health programs, such as WIC, would be cut for women and children who rely on them. Federal support for dozens of Head Start facilities in Seattle and across our State would be at risk.

The good news is that none of this has to happen. We still have time, and the Senate has passed a shutdown-prevention bill that would avoid all of this harm. The Senate's short-term funding bill would keep the government open at current spending levels with no changes in policies while we continue to work on that important long-term budget bill.

The Senate bill by no means is a long-term solution. It is not even close. But as we work to bridge the gap between the parties on budget issues, the absolute bare minimum Congress should be able to do, the very least we owe to our constituents is to not actively hurt them and sabotage the economy.

Playing partisan games with a temporary stopgap continuing resolution is like trying to take away health care from millions of Americans. Tea party Republicans are doing exactly that. Many of their fellow Republicans believe this is an irresponsible and unworkable attitude. Many Republicans have spoken to discourage their own colleagues from waging this pointless, harmful fight over defunding the Affordable Care Act. They have agreed with Democrats that while we might not see eye to eye on everything, we don't have to abandon our basic responsibilities—like keeping the government open—in order to negotiate.

We desperately need this type of commonsense bipartisanship because we have seen repeatedly that families across the political spectrum are sick of governing by crisis and the uncertainty that it creates in their lives. They are sick of gridlock in Washington, DC, that impacts everything from their childcare to their paycheck.

Unfortunately, it seems as if the House Republicans haven't had quite enough yet. They seem to think this is some kind of game, that whoever is left holding the hot potato will be held responsible. Let me be very clear. The American people are a lot smarter than that. They know tea party Republicans have been pushing us toward this crisis for months. They are going to know why a shutdown happened should the tea party refuse to pass the Senate's clean continuing resolution to keep the government open.

Allowing our government to shut down isn't in anyone's best interest—not Republicans, not Democrats, and above all, not the American people. So I would like to call on Speaker BOEHNER to take one simple step. I ask simply that he allow a vote on the Senate's clean continuing resolution. I truly believe that given the chance, enough Republicans in the House would join with the Democrats in voting for a clean continuing resolution to keep the government open so we can deal with the bigger issues in front of us.

If Speaker BOEHNER takes that step, we could avoid all the disruption and all of the harm a government shutdown will cause to the families and communities we serve. Then we could move forward and continue our work, which is incredibly important, on a longer term budget deal that ends this crisis and puts our families and our economy first. This is what families across the country expect, and it is what my fellow constituents in the State of Washington expect. That is what I am fighting for, and that is what we should deliver.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Ms. MIKULSKI. I rise to once again speak about where we are, where we ought to be, and where I hope we will be.

It is now 8:30 in the evening. We are 3½ hours, essentially, until the government begins to shut down. Can we believe this? We are the United States of America. We are a superpower. We are supposed to be a nation governed by rule of law, and we are about to shut down—not shut us down because of a catastrophic event that hit us. It is not as if a meteor has streaked across the sky and hit the United States of Amer-

ica, taking out our power grid and rendering us powerless.

It is not as if we have been hit by a global pandemic that would bring us to our knees. We are in a self-induced act, about to shut down the functioning of the government of the United States of America. I find this shocking.

I have been through this in the mid-1990s. It is deeply disturbing to the people who work for the Federal Government, who get up every day and go to their job trying to perform a service or a function they consider important to the United States, whether it is in transportation, protecting the environment, Federal law enforcement, important financial regulatory agencies, such as our consumer protection agency or our financial services or the Consumer Product Safety Commission in my own State, which protects us and particularly our children against harmful products.

So there are those functions that are going to be shut down. You know what is going to be said to those people—to the men and women who work for the United States of America. Most of you are considered nonessential.

That might be a witty throwaway line for a cable TV show, but I happen to think they are very essential and so does the rest of America.

These people are performing very important functions to protect America.

The House feels it protected America by passing a military pay bill. The Senate passed it by unanimous consent. But guess what. It still means almost 50 percent of the men and women who work at the Department of Defense will be furloughed tomorrow. They are going to be told they are nonessential. Who is essential to defense and who isn't? We certainly know our men and women who wear the uniform and who are in harm's way need to get their pay. They need to get their supplies. They need to get what they need to defend America, but they also need a fully functioning Department of Defense.

I think there are other agencies that protect the United States, one of which is Federal law enforcement—whether it is the FBI, the Marshal Service, the Drug Enforcement Agency, and, yes, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. They put themselves in the line of fire too, along with our Customs and our Border Patrol agents, some of whom have already died. What about our prison guards who are there facing people who are ready to either kill them or break out or break them up at the first chance they can get.

We don't have to pursue this route. Remember, this is self-induced. It is, as our President said, being induced by one faction in one party in one House of our government over one issue—not funding, but should we fund the President's Affordable Care Act. That is the law of the land. It is already in existence, and a good part of it will go into effect on October 1.

When I talk about this, I am speaking from the standpoint of being the chair of the committee called the Appropriations Committee. That is the committee that puts money into the Federal checkbook. That Federal checkbook keeps the entire discretionary funding for the U.S. Government operating—and it is \$1 trillion. Wow. What a number. Gasp. You know what. It is a big number, but it is a big country with big responsibilities.

That is not the total funding of the Federal Government because there is mandatory spending. Mandatory spending is our Social Security benefits, our veterans' benefits, earned benefits—earned benefits. All of that is over several other trillion dollars. There is a dispute about how much the spending should be. That is an honest dispute. That is what funding disputes and resolutions should be about. I should be in a room right this very minute with my House counterpart, Congressman HAL ROGERS, the Republican chairman, a fine, honorable man from Kentucky, and my Democratic counterpart Congresswoman NITA LOWEY from New York, along with my vice chairman, Senator RICHARD SHELBY, another fine Southern gentleman, a fiscal conservative, and we should be discussing that.

But that is not what we are talking about. We are not talking about what is the House's number, what is the Senate's number, what is the best number to fund our government and do it in a way that is smart, effective, and frugal. Oh no. The big fight is over ObamaCare. That is not what it should be about. We have had something called continuing resolutions before. A continuing resolution should have another word in it—"funding." It is the continued funding resolution, and it is to keep government funded while we resolve our disputes.

These resolutions were always, No. 1, short term, and No. 2, they focused on fiscal differences—where did we disagree on fiscal matters. And there is disagreement. The House marked up their bills primarily to \$988 billion. That acknowledged that sequester is the new normal. We in the Senate marked up our bill, and the number we used was \$1.058 trillion. The number I used came from the Senate-passed budget bill under the chairmanship of Senator PATTY MURRAY. So there is a \$70 billion difference between the House and the Senate, and that is an honest dispute.

I am ready to negotiate with Congressman ROGERS, but I am not ready to capitulate. What does capitulate mean? It means we don't even get to a number because we are fighting about ObamaCare. We should be discussing what is the way to do this. I am willing to see a compromise because my goal is that in December we will pass all of the funding bills, that we would have canceled sequester for 2 years, and we would have formed a compromise on a number that does reduce public debt—we acknowledge that—but that also

makes public investments that create jobs and growth in our country. We would do that through transportation, research and development, and things we can also make and sell overseas. These are the kinds of things we want to invest in—the physical infrastructure and human infrastructure, such as education, research and development. We want to have the kind of approach that is progrowth and a pro-American future. I want to get to that debate. I want to get to that discussion. I want to get to that conference. But I cannot get to it because we are fighting over ObamaCare.

Somehow or another that term is supposed to be kind of a sarcastic thing, to call it “ObamaCare.” I think we need to respect the President of the United States. I like calling it the Affordable Care Act. But if people want to call it ObamaCare, let them do it. The President does care. He does care that 42 million people don’t have health insurance and that we needed to reform our health care system to get more value for our dollar and get rid of the punitive practices of insurance companies denying people health care on the basis of a preexisting condition and, by the way, as a consumer advocate the Chair knows this, charging women much more for insurance than men are charged of comparable age and health status.

So I come to the floor tonight and I ask my House colleagues—I served in the House—please, let’s stop the ideological amendments and get on to what appropriations are supposed to be, what a continuing resolution is supposed to be—a short-term approach. That is why I am recommending November 15, to get us to the point where we have compromise on fiscal matters—how can we end the sequester for 2 years, how can we pass all of our funding bills, and how can we come to a sensible compromise on the \$70 billion difference between us.

We have tried everything we know. Senator MURRAY worked very hard to pass the budget bill. We passed it in a marathon session, and I was proud of us. We worked hard. We had great debate. It was heartfelt and hard fought. But in the end, we had over 70 votes. Then Senator MURRAY did what the law requires. She said she wanted to go to conference, along with her vice chairman and ranking member Senator SESSIONS. But six Republican Senators objected. So we have yet to be able to even have a conference to get to the overall budget, which is about what our tax policy should be, our approach to mandatory spending, and a target number for me to reach with my appropriations members on both sides of the aisle.

We never got to that. So we marked up our bills in appropriations. We followed the guidelines given to us by the Senate bill at \$1.058 trillion. We have been in frequent conversation—frequent conversation—with Congressman ROGERS and Congresswoman LOWEY.

That is the way Senator SHELBY and I work. We also have had frequent conversations. But we are talking to ourselves.

So now I am talking to the American people. I think they want an orderly process. The Founders of our country said we would not be a government of personalities and plebiscites and wins and whims. We would be a government of institutions and laws and a process within our parliamentary form of government for resolving disputes.

Let us get back to regular order. Let us pass a simple straightforward continuing resolution to keep the government open until November 15, with the direction that we end sequester, come up with a compromise on the funding, and, at the same time, be able to pass all of our bills. I think we can do it. I think there is the will. I think there is the wallet. We just need to find the way. The way for the House is to give us a plain straightforward bill. Let us pass it over here. Let us keep America open and let us keep America running.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, when defining insanity, Albert Einstein said: It is doing the same thing over and over and thinking you are going to get a different result.

Einstein was a genius, but it doesn’t take a genius to figure out the proof is watching the House Republicans because they have lost their minds. They keep trying to do the same thing over and over. They have voted to repeal ObamaCare 45 or 46 times. That is kind of a lot of repetition. Now they are trying to do it again.

They just passed over there another piece of legislation to try and diffuse, defeat, and get rid of ObamaCare. But ObamaCare is the law. We had a couple of Republicans today come and talk about the Obama health care bill. That has long since passed. It is the law. Do I need to remind everyone again that the U.S. Supreme Court has said it is constitutional?

The Speaker, instead of allowing all 435 Members of the House of Representatives to vote to keep the government open for business, is once again pushing for a government shutdown. I think this is what they want. Remember, they don’t believe in government. So what is a real good way to hurt government? Shut it down.

The House once again has attached ridiculous policy riders that are dead on arrival over here.

I heard this story before—in fact, just 6 hours ago. Republicans are once again threatening to shut down the government unless Democrats repeal ObamaCare for 1 year. But, once again, we will not relitigate the health care debate or negotiate at the point of a gun. This time the House has attached a poisoned pill that would punish 16,000 congressional staff. The amendment originally offered by the junior Senator from Louisiana would force congress-

sional staff to cover the full cost of their health care.

Think about this for a minute. Others have thought about it. The newspaper Politico said yesterday, perfectly explaining the hypocrisy of this approach:

Some health care opponents claim the Obama administration is giving members of Congress and their staffs special treatment under the Affordable Care Act. The claim, which . . . is simply false: Although they will be required to enroll in health plans offered within the new health-insurance exchanges under the law, members of Congress and their staffs will not receive extra financial help to pay for their medical care.

In reality, it’s the critics—as part of their ongoing assault on the health care law—who are seeking special treatment for Congress, by proposing to make members and their staffs the only workers in the United States whose employer is barred by law from helping to cover their premiums.

I repeat, in reality it is the critics—Politico said—as part of their ongoing assault on the health care law—who are seeking special treatment from Congress, by proposing to make members and their staffs the only workers in the United States whose employer is barred by law from helping to cover their premiums.

Like other Americans who get their health care through their jobs, a portion of the cost of congressional staff health care premiums is currently covered by their employer. Their employer is the Federal Government. There are about 6 million of us. In other words, Members of Congress and congressional staff live by the same rules as other Americans and other Federal employees. As a matter of fact, all Members of Congress will be getting their health care on marketplace exchanges just like tens of millions of other Americans. Six hundred thousand Nevadans are now eligible. They will start signing up tomorrow. But House Republicans want to force our staff, who work so hard, to live by a different set of rules.

Although many of these Republicans have gladly allowed the Federal Government to pay for a portion of their own health insurance, for years—decades, some of them—they now want to force 16,000 congressional employees to cover the full cost of their health insurance.

If Republican Senators believe they should bear the full cost of their own health insurance, they should decline the employer contribution and pay their own way. They should stop being hypocritical. They should practice what they preach. But punishing 16,000 innocent congressional workers is simply mean-spirited.

Speaker BOEHNER knows this new amendment won’t last any longer than the last one, once it gets to the Senate; and it should be quick. The Senate will vote it down, and the House Republicans will be in the same pickle they are in right now—but with even less time left before the government shuts down.

But there is still a way for the Speaker to get out of this quagmire, to get out of this ditch, this hole that they have dug for themselves. But I am not sure they want out of this hole, because common sense dictates, if you want to get out of the hole, stop digging deeper. But they do that. They are over there now figuring how glad they are the hole is deeper than it ever was. I believe there is a significant number—if not the majority—of the House Republicans who want the government to close.

So here is what the Speaker should do to get out of this hole that he has dug: Let the House vote, all 435 Members, on the continuing resolution that we passed. We did it on Friday. We affirmed that this afternoon. Stop standing in the way, I say to the Speaker JOHN BOEHNER. Let the House work its will.

If Speaker BOEHNER prevents the Senate bill from coming to the floor before midnight, the responsibility for this government shutdown is clearly a Republican government shutdown and will rest squarely on his shoulders, as all America knows.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I thank the majority leader for the statement he just made.

It is hard to believe that we are a little over 3 hours away from shutting down the government of the United States of America. When you hear about this happening in foreign countries, you think: It is a shame they just aren't as stable and strong as our great democracy. Yet here we are, facing that possibility just a few hours from now, and it is through our own fault. It is the failure of leadership.

I will tell you what we have done in the Senate. I think it is the right thing. We passed a clean CR, a clean budget bill. No political strings attached. None. We could have attached the immigration bill, the farm bill, a lot of possibilities there. None. A clean budget bill for America's government for the next 6 weeks, we sent it over to the House and said, just vote for this, and we don't have to shut down the government. They have said "no" repeatedly. And they are about to send us the third effort of the House, and it too will be defeated because they are obsessed with ObamaCare—obsessed with the Health Care Reform Act. More than obsessed. They are living in mortal fear of what is going to happen starting tomorrow.

As we will see, across America they are going to announce the insurance exchanges in every State. People who have never had health insurance in their entire lives will have a chance to buy it. Some of it will be affordable for a lot of families. Some of it will be the first chance a family has had to buy health insurance.

There was an article I read over the weekend in one of the Chicago papers about a family raising a child with

mental illness. As a consequence, they have been disqualified every time they tried to buy health insurance. Nobody will insure them because their child suffers from mental illness. Guess what. As of tomorrow they will get a list of health insurance plans in their State they can buy. And it is in competition—in a marketplace—and they can choose from many different options. In my State of Illinois, there are 54 different options that we can choose from for our health insurance. It means for that family which has lived without health insurance because of the mental illness of their son, for the first time in their lives they will be able to buy health insurance.

If one has ever lived as a parent with a sick child without health insurance, you will never forget it as long as you live. I know of what I speak. I was there and I remember it, and I will never forget it. When you finally get health insurance, you can breathe again knowing that, if something happens, you will get help in paying those medical bills. For some of these families, for a lifetime they have never had a chance.

That is why the Republicans want to stop ObamaCare. They don't want these exchanges to be announced. They don't want people to see these options. They know what is going to happen: 40 million uninsured Americans are going to take to this because it gives them the first lifeline they have ever seen when it comes to health insurance. That is what it is all about, and that is why they fear it and hate it so much. It is going to work. It is going to give peace of mind to families. And we are never going back.

We will change some of these provisions in this health care reform. Of course, we will. Anything this big is going to be changed, as it should be. Wisdom and experience is going to give us some ideas of how to make it better and stronger and work more fairly. That is why the Republicans are so determined to stop it tonight, before it can go into its first phase of advertising marketplaces tomorrow.

They are going to fail, again. For the third time they are going to fail in just a few days with this House approach with strings attached.

And there is one other element here. I am glad the majority leader raised it. People think that Members of Congress have these gilded health insurance plans, and the honest answer is we do have a pretty good health insurance plan. We go through what is known as the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program. Eight million Federal employees and their families, including Members of Congress and their staff, buy into it. It has been around for decades. It works well. My wife and I can choose from nine different health insurance plans in Illinois as Federal employees. We choose the big Blue Cross plan, and we pay the highest premium for it. But our employer pays a share of the premium. This is not a radical idea.

One hundred fifty million Americans have exactly the same arrangement. They get their health insurance through their work, and their employer pays a portion of the health insurance premium.

Now come the House Republicans and they have come up with a new idea.

First, the requirement that Members of Congress and their staff buy insurance through the marketplace. It is OK with me. I have taken a look at the marketplace plans. They will cover my family just fine, thank you.

Now they add the kicker. But, the Federal Government cannot pay for any of the premiums. Why? Because we know, under the health insurance marketplace small businesses with fewer than 50 employees can provide an employer contribution to their employee buying through that marketplace. It is in the law.

So Members of Congress aren't being treated any differently when our employer—the Federal Government—pays part of our premium in the marketplace. That is all that the law says. They want to stop that. It isn't because of the injustice, because others are getting the same benefit and we are not getting special treatment. It is because they want to find a way to create some pain in the process.

Senator REID talked about 16,000 congressional workers and their family members. I am sure that number included their family members. They want to single them out and say that they get no employer contribution for their health insurance. Shame on them for coming up with this idea.

To deny hard-working people—whether Members of Congress or our staff—the basic protection of health insurance without digging deeper into their pockets, is that their idea of making this a fairer, more just society? I don't think so.

We are going to reject what the House is about to send over, and the clock is ticking. It will be a few hours left before midnight. There is an answer to this, though, an easy one.

Right now, Speaker BOEHNER has in his power the ability to call a bill on the floor that will avoid the government shutdown. It is a bill passed in the Senate, a bill with no political strings attached, a simple extension of the government's budget for 6 weeks. He can do it. He can stop what otherwise will happen tomorrow morning, when agencies all across our Nation give notice to their Federal employees: Go home. We are shut down. It means hundreds of thousands of Federal employees tomorrow will be sent home and not paid for their day's work, and the things they do to make this a stronger country and to keep our government working will just come to a stop.

The greatest Nation on earth shutting down its government on October 1, 2013. It is totally unnecessary. It is a manufactured political crisis by tea party Republicans. We are hoping that

some of our friends on the Republican side of the aisle—conservatives, moderate conservatives from all over the Nation—will join us.

Let's spare this embarrassment for America. Let's allow those Federal workers to go to work tomorrow as they should and provide our country the services it needs. Let's get ready for health care reform and the marketplace, and let's let the American people be the judge as to whether it is right or not. I think it will be. But trying to stop it in its tracks is just a fool's errand, as one of the Members of Congress on the Republican side described it.

If the Speaker would call the spending bill that passed the Senate for a vote tonight in the House of Representatives, we can be spared this government shutdown.

Madam President, I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. REID. Madam President, will my friend withhold for a question?

Mr. DURBIN. I withhold.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I was just speaking with my friend from Arizona, and I direct this question to my friend from Illinois.

Nevada is not a heavily populated State as is Illinois, but we have a number of really beautiful systems that are part of our national park treasures.

We have one, Lake Mead, which we all know about. We have about 15,000 people visit there every day. That will close at 12:01 tonight. That is about 550,000 or 600,000 people a year. And Red Rock is a beautiful place. Tourists love it, just like we love Lake Mead. We have 1 million people a year come in.

This is going to happen all over America. I mentioned just a couple of things in Nevada. I will bet my friend knows of national treasures in Illinois that will close. Is that true?

Mr. DURBIN. I would say to the Senator from Nevada that we have 50,000 Federal employees in Illinois, and we expect the majority of them to be sent home tomorrow. They are working in places such as the Rock Island Arsenal. Some of those employees will have to go home tomorrow morning. These are men and women who make the armaments America needs to be safe. The same will happen at Scott Air Force Base and at Great Lakes Naval Training Station. That is the reality.

I might also add to the Senator, because of my responsibilities on the Appropriations Committee I was briefed this afternoon about the impact of a government shutdown on the intelligence agencies of the United States. I am not at liberty to give a number, but it is an amazingly large percentage of those working in intelligence agencies tomorrow who will be told to go home. These men and women are watching out for our safety and security, to guard against terrorism every single day. Because the government shuts down, they will be sent home. Not all

of them; the military personnel involved will continue. But the non-military personnel, many of them, thousands of them, will be sent home from work tomorrow. For what purpose? To make a political point about the power of Congress to shut down the government?

It doesn't make us any safer as a nation. It certainly doesn't enhance our reputation. And it is not helping to build our economy. As the Senator from Nevada knows, we are making a recovery. It is slow. We have been told by the Business Roundtable, not necessarily an ally of the Democratic Party, that this tea party Republican strategy will be disastrous in terms of economic growth. I don't know if the word was calamitous or catastrophic or cataclysmic—whatever, it was one of those. They told us to do this will be damaging to this economy. Yet the House Republican leadership is hell-bent on getting this done, shutting down this government tonight.

All they have to do is take what has passed the Senate, our budget proposal that has passed the Senate, and call it for a vote. If they call it for a vote, it will pass and they know it, and Speaker BOEHNER and the tea party Republicans live in fear of that possibility.

I hope they come to their senses. This is about more than a political bragging point, more than tomorrow's headline. We can avoid shutting down this government.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Kaine). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent morning business be closed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

MAKING CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask the Chair lay before the Senate a message from the House with respect to House Joint Resolution 59.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair lays before the Senate the following message from the House, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Resolved, That the House recede from its amendments to the amendment of the Senate to the resolution H.J. Res. 59, entitled "Joint Resolution making continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes," and concur with a House amendment to the Senate amendment.

Mr. REID. I move to table the House amendment to the Senate amendment and ask for the yeas and nays on my motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 54, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 211 Leg.]

YEAS—54

Baldwin	Harkin	Murray
Baucus	Heinrich	Nelson
Begich	Heitkamp	Pryor
Bennet	Hirono	Reed
Blumenthal	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Boxer	Kaine	Rockefeller
Brown	King	Sanders
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schatz
Cardin	Landrieu	Schumer
Carper	Leahy	Shaheen
Casey	Levin	Stabenow
Coons	Manchin	Tester
Donnelly	Markey	Udall (CO)
Durbin	McCaskill	Udall (NM)
Feinstein	Menendez	Warner
Franken	Merkley	Warren
Gillibrand	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Hagan	Murphy	Wyden

NAYS—46

Alexander	Enzi	Moran
Ayotte	Fischer	Murkowski
Barrasso	Flake	Paul
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Roberts
Chambliss	Heller	Rubio
Chiesa	Hoeven	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Coburn	Isakson	Shelby
Cochran	Johanns	Thune
Collins	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Corker	Kirk	Vitter
Cornyn	Lee	Wicker
Crapo	McCain	
Cruz	McConnell	

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be a period of morning business for debate only until 11 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, and that at 11 o'clock I be recognized.

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

Mr. REID. I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there is some dispute here. I thought I said that there would be 10 minutes for debate only and that at 11 o'clock I would be recognized. I want to make sure I said "for debate only" because there is some dispute as to whether I said that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN.) Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, as you know, we are only 2 hours now from a shutdown. I am sure those who are mesmerized by our behavior saw a group of Senators on the floor who looked like they were smiling and enjoying themselves. Let me tell the Presiding Officer what was going on.

Senators were actually having a conversation. We were talking about is there a possibility of a compromise. What you saw there is what I hope eventually would become a committee of 100, people actually thinking what could get us to a situation where we could begin to focus on the fiscal problems of the United States. There is a difference between the House appropriations bill and the Senate bill. I chair that committee. So there is a difference with us. But what I want people to see is that there are good people on both sides of the aisle who would like to get something done.

The first thing we would like to get done tonight is not to have a government shutdown and to lay the groundwork for a continuing funding resolution that would be short term, that would enable us to come up with a compromise on discretionary spending, where we could reduce our public debt, fund our government at a smart, frugal level, and also do it in the way that promotes growth. This is what I think the mood of many in the Senate is. I think it is the mood on the majority of both sides of the aisle.

So what do we need from our friends in the House? We do not need one more politically provocative, veto-bait rider on the funding resolution. The Senate passed a bill that essentially laid out a framework exactly for what I said, a continuing resolution to November 15, and a fiscal level that is their level now. We want to negotiate up. I certainly do.

If they would just take up the Senate bill which is neat, clean, clear, and gets us moving forward, we could be able to do this. So we were not just ha-ha-ha'ing over there. There is nothing here tonight to ha-ha-ha about. But there is a mood on both sides of the aisle to stop the shutdown, stop the shutdown and stop the slamdown. Let's be able to pass something tonight that gets us to a way that we can keep the government open, keep our processors functioning for compromise and negotiation and be able to get the job done.

I think it would be an outstanding achievement. I believe the mood is here. I said it earlier. I think there is the will. I even think there is the wallet. Please, if the House cooperates, we would even have a way forward.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I wish to follow the comments from the chairman of the Appropriations Committee. This has been a tough week. It has been a tough weekend. It has been a tough day. I think as Members of the Senate, as we approach the showdown of a potential shutdown, it is important for us to recognize what is at stake. This is not just me staying here holding the floor late on a Monday evening. I have neighbors here in Washington, DC, who work for the Federal Government. One works for Homeland Security. One works for the Department of Defense. They asked me over the weekend: Am I working on Tuesday? What is happening on Tuesday? Are we shutting the government down?

When we talk about those who are uncertain about what happens this next week with their jobs, I think it is important to recognize it is not just jobs we are talking about; it is the reality that if I am not at work is the childcare facility my kids go to going to be open? What does that mean to me?

If I am the local sandwich shop owner around the corner from where the Fish and Wildlife Service building is and most of the folks who work for Fish and Wildlife are not working next week, what does that mean to me? How many loaves of bread do I make over this next week? I think we need to appreciate and understand, when we are talking about a government shutdown, it does not just mean those who receive a check from the Federal Government. The ripple effect from what we do has consequences.

As we debate, as we ping-pong back and forth between this body and our colleagues on the House side, I think we need to recognize that there are real lives, real families who are lying awake tonight wondering what the rest of the week is going to mean to them. This is a difficult time for us. There are stakes that are very high.

I have not hidden the fact that I am not a supporter of the Affordable Care Act. I have voted against it every time we have had the opportunity to do so. But do I believe we should shut down the Federal Government at this point because we have not been able to shut down the Affordable Care Act? I think we have a responsibility here. We have a responsibility to govern. We are not doing that right now.

Folks back home are talking about a lot of things, talking about the fact that they had a tough fish season in certain parts of the State, talking about the fact that winter is coming on, and our energy costs are still as high as they ever have been. They are

worried about what is coming forward for them and their families. What they do not need is to see that their government cannot operate.

So as we deal with these very weighty decisions at this very late hour, we need to remember whom we represent, what we are doing here. It is not just about the next election; it is about making sure those people whom we work for are not stressing and are not anxious about what tomorrow is going to bring for them.

So I am hopeful in the less than 2 hours we have, we will be able to figure out how we keep the government running, how we keep the wheels on the bus, and how we get back together.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. I wish to thank my colleague from Alaska Ms. MURKOWSKI and also the chair of the Appropriations Committee Senator MIKULSKI for their comments because I think, as Senator MIKULSKI said, the majority of the Members in this body believe it is important for us to keep the government open.

We may disagree about the Affordable Care Act, but one aspect we ought to be able to agree on is that it is in the best interests of this country to keep government open. I believe the same is true in the House; that if the Speaker would bring up the Senate-passed CR, that is clean, that does not have any amendments on it, that extends funding for government through November 15, that accepts the top line numbers for the amount of money we would spend during that period, accept the House numbers, if the Speaker would let that be voted on, on the floor, I think it would pass the House.

It is unfortunate that he has been unwilling to do that. But the reality is, as both Senators MIKULSKI and MURKOWSKI said, a shutdown of the government is not just about what we are doing on the floor tonight or what the House is doing, it will have ramifications way beyond that.

We had a meeting last week with some economists that included former Treasury Secretary Bob Rubin. One of the things he said to us was that unlike the last government shutdown in 1995, when there was not a real long-term impact from that shutdown, we are looking at a real long-term impact from a potential shutdown. We have already heard Mark Zandi, an economist, say that if it continues longer than a few days, if it continues for weeks, as it did in 1995, it could affect our growth in the fourth quarter over 1 percent.

At a time when the economy is struggling, we cannot afford to have that kind of a hit to our economy. Families who are seeing their 401(k)s just beginning to recover, pension plans that are beginning to see recovery, cannot afford to have that kind of a hit. We have already seen the stock market reacting. So we know there is going to be an impact.

In New Hampshire we have 4,000 Federal employees who are going to get furloughed starting tomorrow if we are not able to keep the government open. That affects not just them and their family, that is bad enough, but it affects the grocery stores they frequent. It affects the gas station. It affects every business they are shopping in.

We know 1,000 small businesses are not going to be able to go to the SBA and look for loans if the government shuts down. We know people are not going to be able to get their mortgages through the Federal Home Loan Agency because it is not going to be operating.

We know in New Hampshire, as in Alaska, that tourism is going to be hit because visas are not going to get processed. We know that at the Department of Defense, half of their civilian workers are going to be furloughed; in New Hampshire, our Portsmouth Naval Shipyard—in New Hampshire and Maine. I see my colleague from Maine. The shipyard workers are going to get furloughed.

So this is going to have a huge impact on families, on businesses, on the economy. We cannot afford this kind of political gamesmanship. We have to work together. We have to solve these problems, not just for the future of this country here in America but also for our standing in the world, where the rest of the world is looking at us, asking: What is the matter with the Congress that they cannot solve an issue that they ought to be able to come together to address?

I certainly hope in the next couple of hours we can see some progress in the House. I hope the Speaker will bring a clean CR to the floor, will let the Members of the House vote on that so we can keep the government operating for the good of the country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, we have a number of serious difficulties in our country. The most serious is a lack of jobs and a lack of economic growth. The Affordable Care Act is devastating to that situation, making it much worse.

Our colleagues need to understand, as we talk about the difficulties that would happen if there would be a shutdown—and there will be difficulties, for sure. But the idea that this is not an important matter that needs to be addressed when we confront the Affordable Care Act, ObamaCare, is wrong. We have to address this question.

One thing I would say to all of us, the numbers are in and it is quite clear: 77 percent of the jobs that have been created since January of this year are part time. Every economist has said that is in large part driven by the Affordable Care Act. They have no doubt that this is a major factor and is an exceedingly unusual and dangerous trend that businesses are hiring people part time, not full time—77 percent of those hired this year are for part time work.

When we look at the job numbers that will come in tomorrow and at how many people found jobs, maybe it will be 180,000, maybe it will be 210,000. They will brag about that I'm sure. But has anybody thought about the fact that to an unprecedented degree those jobs will be part time, without health care, without retirement benefits, and less job security? Somebody needs to be thinking about this. The health care law is absolutely a driving factor. Businesses told me that as I traveled my State in August. They say they are trying to keep small businesses below 50 employees too. They are not hiring people only to stay below 50 employees so they don't have to comply with some of these rules.

What have we heard all year? We are not going to talk about fixing the Affordable Care Act. We are not going to bring it up. We are not going to get a single amendment in the Senate.

The House has repeatedly legislated on the Affordable Care Act. The Senate refuses to take up their bills, refuses to allow votes, refuses to have a full debate. We are at the end of the year, and nothing has been done about it. We could expect some tension to build up here.

What I hear the House saying is: Delay this bill for 1 year. It is not working. Delay the individual mandate and give ordinary Americans some relief from this law. The President has already delayed parts of ObamaCare—probably without lawful authority—and delayed it for a year for Big business. But the President and Senator REID have, in effect, said: We will shut down the government before we delay the law for ordinary Americans.

The House has passed a bill to fund the government, but the bill that was just voted down would simply have delayed the individual mandate in the Affordable Care Act for 1 year. Maybe this time we could actually fix some of the problems or change some of the provisions in ObamaCare that are so damaging to America.

One thing I wish everyone to know—and I am the ranking Republican on the Budget Committee and we deal with the numbers—I wrote to the Government Accountability Office. They are an independent group, and I asked them what the long-term costs of the Affordable Care Act would be. The President said, unequivocally, this bill will not add one dime to the debt of the United States. Do you remember him saying that? He said it many times. His aides and Senators said the same thing many times. The President went on to say, however, you may have forgotten: Not now, not ever, period.

Well, is that true? Will the Obama administration health care law not add one dime to the United States debt now or ever?

What did the Government Accountability Office say? This is a chart that reflects what they told the Budget Committee in response to my question.

They said over the 75-year period, it adds \$6.2 trillion to the debt of the

United States. That number is huge, as \$1 trillion is a lot of money.

How huge is it? How do we compare it? All of us know that Social Security is in great difficulty and under serious threat. We have to reform it and put it on a sound basis. It is not going to be easy to do that. Why? Well, it has unfunded liabilities. We don't have enough money coming in to pay for the commitments we made to pay out in the future.

Remember, Social Security has a dedicated source of revenue as well. It is on your paycheck every month. It is the FICA we pay. It goes to Social Security and there is a Medicare withholding too. Those funds are dedicated for Social Security or Medicare. But people are living longer, and the benefits are such that we are going to have a shortfall in the future.

How much is that Social Security shortfall we have been wrestling over how to fix? It is \$7.7 trillion. In the ObamaCare bill that passed on Christmas Eve, that they rammed through the Senate on Christmas Eve on a party-line vote before Scott Brown could take office and provide the vote for Massachusetts that would have killed the bill. They rammed it through the Senate without any amendments, and it added at least another \$6.2 trillion to the long-term debt of the United States of America. It is worse than that, and I can explain why it is even worse. That number does not consider interest on the \$6.2 trillion over 75 years. I suspect the interest is going to be many trillions of dollars more and it adds to the debt.

As we borrow the money, we pay interest on the money we borrow. It is not free. We borrow the money on the market or from trust funds. This is a big deal. The American people need to know that the promise this law will not add to the debt is absolutely false.

This is based on, the GAO said, accepted accounting principles and a realistic scenario of what is likely to happen over time should the plan be implemented. One of the things they say is the cuts they made to Medicare providers, hospitals and doctors, that provide health care to seniors are so large they will not be sustainable. If they continue to cut in that fashion over a period of years, hospitals would close and doctors would quit practicing. You cannot do it. We are already dealing with a doc fix now on a bill that cut doctors more than they could reasonably be cut. Every year we have to find up to \$20 billion to get the money to fund the doctors because we can't cut below a certain amount. So I would say this GAO number is low.

As we wrestle with the great responsibilities we have been given as Senators, yes, we need to think about what would happen in the next few days if the government does not function. I hope we avoid that. We absolutely should avoid that because it is not good.

We need to be asking ourselves what are we doing to our children, grandchildren, and the financial stability of the United States of America with a new entitlement program that is going to commence now, by January 1, that will add more than \$6.2 trillion to the debt of the United States. This is a huge amount. I ask our colleagues to consider it.

One more matter that shows how we get in trouble financially is when the numbers get so large nobody can quite follow. The larger the numbers get, the harder it is to follow.

Under the legislation of the Affordable Care Act, the plan was to cut up to \$500 billion over the next 10 years from Medicare by cutting providers while promising patients would receive just as good health care as they always did. We are not cutting your benefits, we are only going to cut providers. We have done this before. At some point you can't sustain that.

On December 23, the night before this bill passed, I spoke with the Director of the Congressional Budget Office, our own accountant, and told him in a conference call words to this effect: It is absolutely unbelievable to me, Mr. CBO Director, Mr. Elmendorf, that we are about to vote tomorrow morning, we are told, on the largest health care bill since Medicare and we don't know how to count the money. I think they are double-counting the money. This is unbelievable, how many hundred billion dollars we are talking about, it seems to me. I could hear somebody on his end of the conference call say: It is double-counting. I heard someone say it in the background.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. I ask unanimous consent of the Chair for 1 additional minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the Presiding Officer.

Mr. Elmendorf, by the next morning, gave us a letter. It laid out and contained this language. He said:

The key point is that savings to the HI trust fund—

That is the Medicare trust fund.

—of \$500 billion over 10 years, the savings from the HI trust fund by cutting providers and increase Medicare taxes under PPACA—That is the Affordable Care Act.

—would be received by the government only once, so they cannot be set aside to pay for future Medicare spending and, at the same time, pay for current spending on other parts of the legislation or on other programs.

You can't simultaneously say you are using this money to support Medicare by making Medicare more sustainable and then spend the money on a new program because then it is not going to be available to strengthen Medicare. That double-counting is not even taken into account in the \$6.2 trillion figure derived from the GAO study.

I would conclude by saying the unfunded liabilities in this law are huge. They are a direct threat to the future of the United States financially. At this point in history, we need to be saving Medicare, we need to be saving Social Security, and we need to be saving Medicaid. We don't need to be starting another program without sufficient funds to pay for it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I am happy to have an opportunity to speak for a minute, particularly following my good friend, the Senator from Alabama. He and I have worked on so many issues. It shows one day you can work together and agree on something and the next day you can have different points of view.

He and I worked successfully on the RESTORE Act. We worked on the FAIR Act where we can get a portion of our revenues to bring back to Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, from offshore oil and gas production. I have to say I have enjoyed working with him many times over the years we have been in the Senate.

Tonight I take issue with some of the things he said. To recapitulate, with much due respect, if everything the Senator said about the Affordable Care Act was actually factual—and it is not—if everything he said about the act was true, this time and method of shutting down the government to prove his point is still wrong.

You should not hold Federal employees, the economy of the United States, the governments of the United States—Federal, State, or local which will be affected by this—hostage because you agree or think that the Affordable Care Act is a bad act. It is the wrong method and it is the wrong time for that debate. That is the issue.

They are on the floor debating whether the Affordable Care Act is good or bad. This is not the debate we are having tonight. The debate we should be having tonight, whether it is good or bad, is, is it worth shutting down the government of the United States tonight? The answer is clearly no.

Secondly, the Senator from Alabama said this bill was passed in the middle of the night. It was passed late one night several years ago. It has been passed by the House and the Senate, signed into law as every bill by the President of the United States. In the case of this law, it was upheld by the Supreme Court and is being implemented by a majority of States in the United States. This bill, law, concept, and approach was debated for 40 years in 20 Congresses. This wasn't debated in 1 night, in 1 week, morning, noon, or midnight, but 40 years across many Presidents, both Republican and Democratic. The question was, How does the richest Nation in the world, the most developed democracy on Earth, a Nation with 1 million-plus workers, pro-

vide affordable health care without bankrupting the country and putting too much burden on either individuals or businesses?

There were ideas thrown out for the 40 years this was debated—not 1 night, not just on Christmas Eve. There were hundreds of hearings, thousands of documents, millions of pieces of paper and studies done on the subject, and there were about four options:

One, Medicare for all—lots of opposition to that. It is expensive—popular but expensive.

The second option was a single-payer system similar to Canada's. It was very popular with some, deemed too socialistic by others.

The third option was Medicaid savings accounts, health care savings accounts. Republicans love it. Democrats don't like it, don't think it is fair to the middle class. It would only really help those at the top 2 percent. We said No.

So we compromised on an idea that came not out of the Democratic caucus but out of the Republican caucus, not out of a Democratic think tank but a Republican think tank—the Heritage Foundation—and we passed a private sector, market-based insurance choice for all Americans.

But that debate is over. At least the bill has passed; the debate will go on for a while—but not about shutting the government down. The debate as far as the bill passing, it is done. It is signed into law. And contrary to arguments made on the other side that nobody is interested in amending anything, I don't know if they have read their CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. It is right in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. We have already amended the law twice on a vote in the House and the Senate. Remember a year and a half ago we passed the 1099? We repealed that. It was a part of the way we paid for the bill. We reviewed it after we did it and thought that wasn't a very good idea, and we changed it. There has been another change to the law. It is not as if this law will never be changed. But for Republicans—particularly the extremists—every time we come up to a budget debate or the full faith and credit of the United States, to reengage in this debate, it is not fair to the American people, it is not fair to the workers of the United States, and it is not fair to the businesses in the United States. It is just simply not the right way to legislate.

So I would like the chairman from Alabama, as the ranking member of the Budget Committee, I wish he would get on the floor and urge his colleagues to go to conference on the budget he was talking about because I do agree with him. We do have a deficit problem. We do have a debt problem. We do have some entitlements that need to be looked at. We have to get our budget in balance. But the way to do it is not to hold the American people hostage, to take their jobs away from them and shut the government down. That is not

the way to operate. It is to go to conference.

We have tried 18 times to go to conference, and we have been blocked by the Senator from Texas. The Senator from Texas Mr. CRUZ has objected to going to conference to debate the budget.

Let's debate the budget. Let's debate the appropriations bills. I am an appropriator. I am the chair of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.

Tomorrow thousands of people are going to be laid off. People who protect our borders, who help navigate international trade, help keep our hospital industry going, passports, et cetera, are going to be impacted. But instead of the Senator arguing and urging us—as the ranking member of the Budget Committee—to go to the Budget Committee to negotiate, they have objected. We can't go to a conference.

Senator MURRAY passed her budget months ago. We passed a budget. The House has passed a budget. They aren't the same budget, but it is their version and our version. Let's go to conference and work it out. But, no, we have to now threaten the shutdown of the entire government of the United States because the Republicans after 40 years of debate feel that was not enough. Forty years of debate was not enough. Two Presidential elections, which they lost, was not convincing enough. The majority of the Senate fell to the Democrats. That was not convincing enough.

The people who voted that way, their votes, their actions as a democratic nation are being disrespected by our colleagues on the other side. It is not as though this is a dictatorship. We were elected. I was even elected in a State where this is a difficult issue. It is not clear-cut. I have people for it and against it. But after studying and after soul-searching and after looking at all the options and understanding that I have 800,000 people in my State who are uninsured, that I have hundreds of thousands of small businesses that had been dropping their insurance because they couldn't afford it, and that 85 percent of our market is taken up by one company with virtually no competition, I said there has to be a better way. This may not be perfect, but the status quo is worse.

We had that debate, and their side lost. So instead of just trying to fix what they can or suggesting changes or finding a time where we can debate—and we have already changed two things; the President, administratively, has already pushed back one—they want to shut the government down. It is on their shoulders.

So I came to the floor—and I will ask for 5 more minutes—to talk about two things because I have hesitated to speak on this big issue because I have been focused for the last year on a real problem—not that this isn't a problem; it is a problem, but this is a real issue that with a little bit of attention from

everyone and a lot less rhetoric, we could fix this, and that is helping to amend a bill that did pass and does need to be amended, and that is the Biggert-Waters bill.

I am not threatening to shut the government down over this; I am simply asking and raising attention to the fact that at some point we would like to have a debate on this floor and in the House on Biggert-Waters. This was a bill that was passed through here—it wasn't debated for 40 years, it was debated for a very short time. At the time the bill passed—Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 additional minutes.

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. The bill passed out of the committee on the Senate side. It never did come to the floor at all for debate. It went to the House, was changed pretty dramatically, and then was put in a conference committee. This happens sometimes. It is not usual, but it does happen. I am not complaining about that except that as a result of that, hundreds of thousands of people in Louisiana, Texas, Florida, North Dakota, New York, and New Jersey, tomorrow morning—as I guess if the government is shutting down, they may not be able to go to work, if they have a government job—they will have a big fat bill coming on their flood insurance because Biggert-Waters, the bill in the House, had several very pernicious provisions.

There are about 5 million flood insurance policies in the country. There should be about 17 million, but there are only 5. There will be 17 million, or some such universe as that, but there are 5 million now, and we have many in Louisiana.

When a person goes to put their house on the market and they sell it, the act of selling, according to Biggert-Waters, removes their grandfathered status. They then go from that grandfathered status, which was below market rate—and that was done purposely to help people who live in coastal areas—not necessarily in secondary homes, not in condos, not in million-dollar mansions, but people who work on the rivers, who fish, who live in coastal communities, hard-working individuals and small businesses. This allowed them to live where they have lived, in our case, for 300 years. They didn't just move there in the 1980s. They didn't move down there for sunbathing. They have been there for 300 years, and this was to give them an opportunity to live in their homes with reasonable insurance.

In the Biggert-Waters bill, that trigger—the act of putting up a “for sale” sign or selling your house—eliminated the subsidy, virtually rendering a person's house valueless. And it is not just paying 25 percent more, 100 percent more, or 400 percent more. That would be hard enough, but in some cases it literally will render a house valueless because let's say, for instance, you paid

\$1,200 a year for insurance, but let's say the real rate is actually \$15,000. The trigger mechanism means their flood insurance will go from \$1,200 to \$15,000 overnight. No one will buy a home that has a \$15,000 annual premium for insurance. So if they have \$400,000 in equity in their home or \$500,000 or \$150,000 in equity or perhaps they have \$1 million in equity, it is gone because their house will not be able to be sold for virtually any price close to what it is worth. And that is not right. That comes close to a taking.

When this bill passed, I put an objection in the record. I said then that we would be back talking about it. There are ways we can fix bills. We need to get Biggert-Waters fixed and changed, and I want to submit that if we don't shut the government down, we can do it. We can negotiate, we can meet in conference and bring amendments to committees, and we can work together.

I want to read for the RECORD for a few minutes. I don't see anyone else on the floor.

Many in Congress were led to believe that the flood insurance program was unsustainable, that it consistently paid out more in losses than it collected in premiums, and that the only way to balance the ledger was to eliminate subsidies and raise rates. That simply isn't the case.

During 3 of the past 5 years, the program has actually collected more in premium revenue than it paid out in losses. In fact, the program has tabulated an annual surplus 18 times during the 42-year period for which we have data.

Now, there were times, after Florida had that terrible year—2004, I think—when four hurricanes hit and of course after Katrina, where the program took a very strong hit, like when our levees broke and caused so much to drain from the fund. But if we look over time, it was about a \$19 million average loss per year—not great but not horrible; not enough to generate the kind of bill that was passed here that is so draconian.

Continuing to quote:

I also think that most Members of Congress would be surprised to learn that 40 percent of all properties which are required to maintain flood insurance do not have an active policy. This violation of the law costs the program hundreds of millions in lost revenue. Stricter penalties under Biggert-Waters for lenders who fail to enforce mandatory purchase requirements will help to address this, but it is difficult to justify these exorbitant rate increases for people who are participating in the program and playing by the rules when millions of property owners are bucking their legal obligation to pay into the program.

I also think most Members of the Congress and the general public would be shocked to learn that only 44 percent of the money collected by the program is used to cover flood losses in a given year. In fact, the program spends more money paying the insurance companies and agents who administer the program but don't incur any risk and servicing the debt created by the Corps of Engineers than it spends on annual flood losses.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the complete document from which I just quoted.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

THE TRUTH ABOUT PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY

Many in Congress were led to believe that the flood insurance program was unsustainable, that it consistently paid out more in losses than it collected in premiums, and that the only way to balance the ledger was to eliminate subsidies and raise rates. That simply isn't the case.

During 3 of the past 5 years, the program has actually collected more in premium revenue than it paid out in losses. In fact, the program has tabulated an annual surplus 18 times during the 42-year period for which we have data. Over the 26-year period between the time that the federal government took over the program in 1978 and the catastrophic losses in 2004 when Florida was struck by four major hurricanes, the program collected \$10.2 billion in premiums and paid out \$10.7 billion in claims, resulting in a modest deficit of just \$500 million or \$19 million per year on average.

I also think that most members of Congress would be surprised to learn that 40% of all properties which are required to maintain flood insurance do not have an active policy. This violation of the law costs the program hundreds of millions in lost revenue. Stricter penalties under Biggert-Waters for lenders who fail to enforce mandatory purchase requirements will help to address this, but it is difficult to justify exorbitant rate increases for people who are participating in the program and playing by the rules when millions of property owners are bucking their legal obligation to pay into the program.

I also think most members of Congress and the general public would be shocked to learn that only 44% of the money collected by the program is used to cover expected flood losses in a given year. In fact, the program spends more money paying the insurance companies and agents who administer the program but don't incur any risk and to servicing the debt created by the Corps of Engineers than it spends on annual flood losses.

The fiscal structure of the flood insurance program is definitely broken, but it isn't because of subsidies. Taken in combination, these facts paint a very different picture of the National Flood Insurance Program than the one that prevailed during the debate last Congress when Biggert-Waters was presented to us.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President, these are several reasons why this bill needs to be amended. Again, I am not threatening to shut the government down. That is not appropriate to get amendments to this bill. There are ways to amend a bill, and we can work on that.

Madam President, I also ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a quote from Michael Hecht. Michael Hecht is the executive director of GNO, Inc. He is leading a great delegation or a group of people—realtors, bankers, gulf coast residents and many others.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

MICHAEL HECHT QUOTE

I would like to read a statement that was made last week by the President of Greater New Orleans Inc., a regional business organization in Louisiana, which I believe conveys the sentiment of thousands of people who I represent that are facing steep rate increases

in the midst of so many unanswered questions and misconceptions about this program's underlying problems.

"It is irresponsible to introduce drastic reforms that will potentially devastate hundreds of thousands of American home- and business-owners, before basic questions about forgone revenues and high costs are answered. To proceed otherwise, destroying the wealth of innocent Americans—who have done exactly as the government has told them, maintained insurance and often never flooded—is both economically unwise and morally unjust."

Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President, let me read this quote from Michael Hecht. He said:

It is irresponsible to introduce drastic reforms that will potentially devastate hundreds of thousands of American homes and business owners before basic questions about forgone revenues and high costs are answered. To proceed otherwise, destroying the wealth of innocent Americans—who have done exactly as the government has told them, maintained insurance and often never flooded—is both economically unwise and morally unjust.

I know my time is almost to the end. There is no one else on the floor, so I would like to speak until someone else gets here. But this is what we should be working on. We should be working on fixing the flood insurance. Tomorrow morning, October 1, these rates go up. These trigger mechanisms go into effect. It is devastating for people in our States. But the Texas Senators seem to be more concerned about the Affordable Care Act. I understand in their mind it is a problem and in their heart they are sincere. I understand their constituents are complaining. But it is the law, and we should not shut down the government over this.

I wish they would turn their attention to the Biggert-Waters bill, which the House and Senate passed. It needs to be amended. It needs to be fixed, and we need to negotiate a way forward.

No. 2, if people do want to fight about changes to the budget—I am an appropriator. We have been negotiating for years with Republicans about how much to spend, how little to spend, what programs to fund, what not. We do that in a budget conference. We do that in the appropriations bills. In fact, on this measure we are debating tonight the Democrats accepted the House number. Talk about negotiate. We just accepted the number they gave us for the continuing resolution. It was below our number. We want to fund the government in this month a little bit higher, but we even accepted their number. We said, fine, we will take your number.

We usually don't do that. We usually cut it in half or split the difference or say, you want this, we want this. We just took it. We just said yes. They can't even take yes for an answer because they are so committed to using the Federal Government as a hostage, or the full faith and credit of the United States as a hostage to change a bill they had every opportunity to change and didn't change or couldn't change, didn't have the votes to

change. Maybe one day they will. But they don't have those votes in this Chamber tonight and they don't have those votes in the House. If they would let the whole House vote, they most certainly would not. They are just allowing the Republicans to vote. But if they would allow the House to vote in its entirety, representing the country, they would support the position of the Senate and they know that.

I end my remarks by saying let us focus on what we can do to fix some bills, the Biggert-Waters flood insurance bill being one of them. Let's not hold the American public and government hostage over a bill that passed, that was signed into law, and upheld by the Supreme Court and is being implemented by a majority of States in America. We can debate it and not shut down the government over it.

I ask unanimous consent for 1 more minute.

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. I wish to put something else on the RECORD as well that is important for us to think about tonight, besides the underlying debate which I have spoken about and the Biggert-Waters reform which unfortunately is going to go into effect tomorrow. We are going to do a press conference tomorrow on it and try to get as much support as we can for Republicans and Democrats to fix it. But there is another issue I wish to bring up to the body tonight while we are waiting for the leader.

I think with the consent of both Republicans and the Democrats, we could allow the District of Columbia—which is one city that is going to be more impacted than others should the budget of the United States not be able to be negotiated in the next hour or hour and a half. So what I am hoping by raising this issue is that Members will consider that every city in the United States is going to operate tomorrow morning, every State is going to operate tomorrow morning, even if the Federal Government shuts down. They will be impacted, but they will continue to operate with their own money, on their own steam, under their own laws. I would like the same thing for the District of Columbia.

The District of Columbia's budget is 75 percent local and 23 percent Federal. So most of their money is local money raised by local taxes, not the taxpayers of the United States. More impressive than that, they have balanced their budget—unlike us—for 18 years. People may be surprised to know this, but the District of Columbia, which is about 650,000 people, does not have a Senator to speak for them. They have a House Member, but the House Member has no vote. So I wish to speak on their behalf for just a few minutes. They have balanced their budget for 18 years and they have well over \$1 billion cash in the bank.

So I am raising this to my colleagues to ask for us to consider a unanimous

consent resolution that several of us are putting together now. I would love for my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to simply allow the District of Columbia to use their own money—even if the Federal money doesn't come forward, to use their own money raised by their own taxpayers to keep their own government operating, because they are under a special provision to us and have been for many years. People argue whether that is right. That is not the point of this. Whether it is right is of no consequence. It is the law. If we can give them some relief, it would be very helpful to the thousands of people who need a signal from us that just because we can't get our budget straight, just because our budget is in deficit doesn't mean we can't honor the fact that the DC budget is in surplus, \$1 billion in the bank. It has been balanced for 18 years, and 75 percent of their budget comes from their own taxpayers. We should allow them to use their money to stay open.

I hope we avoid a shutdown. It doesn't look we are going to. It could be 1 day, it could be 2 days, it could be 3 weeks, it could be 4 months. Who knows how long it is going to be. I hope it doesn't happen, and I hope it is a very short period of time. But whatever it is, there is no reason in the world for the District of Columbia—as Mayor Gray said: We have balanced our budget for 18 consecutive years. We have well over \$1 billion in the bank. Yet we cannot spend our own money to provide our residents with services they have paid for unless we get permission from a Congress that can't even agree to pay its own bills.

If we can't agree how to pay our bills, I think it is unfortunate. We should. But this is a big city. It is an important city. It is the Capital of the Nation. They should be able to operate tomorrow morning.

I am hoping in the next hours we can find a way. All it takes is a unanimous consent. I know tensions are running high. We can be angry at each other or frustrated, but we should not be angry with the District. They have done nothing wrong. They have balanced their budget. They need to be able to operate. Many people all over the Nation depend on the District government. So let's not shut them down while we are shutting ourselves down.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent there be a period of morning business for debate only until

12 midnight, with Senators permitted to speak until for up to 10 minutes each, and that at 12 midnight I be recognized.

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

Mr. REID. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

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

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

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. REID. Madam President, this is a very serious time in the history of the country. It is hard to comprehend, with millions of people being affected tomorrow—in 65 minutes, actually—Republicans are still playing games.

As I indicated, speaking through the Chair to the senior Senator from Illinois a couple of hours ago, just take a couple of examples. We have 15,000 people a day who come to Lake Mead, spending huge amounts of money to help the economy. They come there to boat, to fish, to recreate. Tomorrow morning they can't go.

We have a beautiful recreational area just a short distance out of Las Vegas. When you fly into Las Vegas, you can see the beautiful red hills. It is called Red Rock. Over 1 million people a year come and visit. Not tomorrow. No. The Republicans are shutting down places like that all over America because they don't agree with government. Tomorrow will be a bad day for government and a day of celebration for the Republican-dominated House led by the tea party over there. We hear the next gambit of the House is to request a conference on the CR.

We like to resolve issues. In the Senate Chamber tonight is PATTY MURRAY, chairman of the Budget Committee. She worked so hard to pass a budget in this body. We worked until 5 in the morning to get it passed. We voted on over 100 amendments. We passed a budget. We passed a budget because it was the right thing to do and the Republicans said we should pass a budget—and we did. Senator MURRAY has for more than 6 months requested a conference on the budget 18 times.

So we like to resolve issues. But we will not go to conference with a gun to our head. The first thing the House has to do is pass a clean 6-week CR. They have that before them. They can do it right now. If they do that, then we will agree to work with Republicans on funding for the government for the remainder of the fiscal year.

I propose that the House pass our clean CR, and we will sit down and discuss funding for the balance of the year. That is it. This deal they are pulling out—they have a rule over there that says they want to go to conference on the CR. That closes the government. They want to close the gov-

ernment. This is all a subterfuge to satisfy the tea party-driven Republicans. This very strange agenda is so hurtful to the American people.

So I want everyone to hear what we just said. We will not go to conference until we get a clean CR. If the government closes, what benefit do we have from that? In 2 weeks the government is not only going to close down—we are going to lose the credit rating because they are talking now about not raising the debt ceiling.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I sort of feel sorry for Speaker BOEHNER. He has this hard-right tea party group that is adamant about shutting the government down. Many of them talked about shutting the government down in their 2010 campaigns. There are clips where they go to the audience: We will shut the government down if we win back the House. And the audience of tea party faithful cheers.

Here we are. Speaker BOEHNER, who has not been able, not been strong enough, frankly, to stand up to the tea party, realizes he is in a real dilemma. They want to shut the government down and he knows that the American people do not want that. CNN came out with a poll today. What should we do, end ObamaCare or keep the government going? Sixty percent said, keep the government going. Only 30 percent—or 34 percent, I believe it was—said end ObamaCare. The closer we get to this fateful hour—and we are only an hour away from a government shutdown—the more people will understand what the Republicans have done.

There is only one answer, and that is for the House to pass the clean CR bill that we have sent them, that they have. They keep coming up with new diversions. They send us a message that says this. They send us a message that says that. Some of it is related to ObamaCare. Some of it is related to contraception. Now they say we want to go to conference. As the leader said, we want to resolve issues. We would like to get a nice omnibus for a whole year, for the remainder of the fiscal year. We realize we have to do that with both Houses. But not with a gun to everybody's head. Let's go to conference? While they shut down the government and hurt millions of innocent people? Speaker BOEHNER is not going to get away with this subterfuge, as he has not gotten away with the previous ones. People will see through it.

It is a way to take the focus off what they really are doing, shutting the government down and trying to get people to follow the diversion. This time it is let's go to conference. Again, there is nothing wrong with a conference, but not, absolutely not when they are shutting the government down in an hour. All the talking in conference will not help the Federal worker who is not getting a paycheck, the highway construction worker whose job uses Federal

funds to build that highway, the veteran who is waiting for a disability claim. A conference is not going to solve that. There is one way to solve it: Pass the clean CR and then have a conference that talks about the issues for the whole year. Resolving funding makes sense but only after they pass our clean CR bill.

Speaker BOEHNER, no more games. We are in the final hours. Pass the clean CR. Don't send us another one of these little gizmos that is simply meant to take attention off the fact that you do not have the courage to keep the government funded. Pass the clean CR and then we can talk about conference.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant majority leader.

Mr. DURBIN. The statement made earlier by the majority leader is worthy of note. In less than an hour the government will close. That means agencies all across the United States will start notifying government employees: Go back home. Don't go to work. You may not be paid today. People who are reaching out to those agencies for services—SBA loans, student loans, advice on Social Security, veterans' benefits—they are going to find recordings instead of government workers there to help them. That is not good. It does not speak well for this great Nation that we have reached this point.

What we hear now from the House of Representatives is they want to talk some more. Now they want to sit down with the Senate to talk this over. But only after the government shuts down. That is the difference. They will only talk after the government shuts down. What the majority leader has said is a reasonable compromise. What he said is this: Pass the 6-week budget that we sent over to you, the CR, with no strings attached, no political gimmicks, so that the government continues functioning, so that America is open for business. Do that and during that time we will sit down and talk with you about future funding for the rest of the year.

Party to that conversation should be the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, Senator MURRAY. She worked hard to pass a budget resolution. She tried 18 times on the floor to get to a conference committee with the House. Every time a tea party Senator got up and objected.

We are prepared to sit down again. Chairman MURRAY is prepared to sit down, as is the chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, the Senator from Maryland. I have worked with her and for her in our effort to get the appropriations bills ready. The two of them, Senators MURRAY and MIKULSKI, can work together in the conference committee and really charter a way to finish this year in an orderly, thoughtful way.

But shutting down the government should not be the starting point. That

is an admission of defeat. Those of us who were sent here to Washington to lead should be ashamed if it reaches that point. What the majority leader has proposed I hope the Speaker of the House of Representatives will take note of. Don't send us the idea of a conference committee after the government shuts down. What the majority leader has said is after we have agreed to keep the government functioning for 6 weeks, then we can sit down and work out the difficult issues that face us.

We have now entertained three different proposals from the House when it comes to funding this government, two today, and we are about to get a third this day. Each one of them has a fatal flaw. It either involves defunding, delaying ObamaCare—to which the President and the Democrats in the Senate would never agree—or in this circumstance they are sending up the idea of a conference committee after the shutdown.

I think what Senator REID has offered now is reasonable, it is constructive, it gives us a chance to do our work. There are differences of opinion, for sure. But it is an orderly process that brings some respect back to Congress as an institution instead of the embarrassment of a shutdown of our important government. I hope the Speaker and staff are listening carefully. I hope they will accept this offer by the majority leader to move forward in a positive and constructive way, to keep the government open, to solve our problems in a bipartisan and constructive fashion.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I find it extremely ironic that we are here right now hearing that the House of Representatives is going to shut down the government and then send us a bill saying they want to talk in a conference committee. Let's remember why we are here right now with the threat of a shutdown where thousands of families and communities are going to be hurt. We passed a budget in the Senate 6 months ago. The House of Representatives passed a budget in the House 6 months ago. The goal was to go together in conference, work out our disagreements, define the funding levels for the coming fiscal year so we would not be sitting tonight, minutes away from a shutdown.

The right thing to have done would have been to go to conference anytime in that last 6 months, as we asked for 18 times, but were told no by the same people who are now sitting on the other side of the aisle and saying: No, they want to shut government down.

Why do they want to do that? They want to create a crisis because they think they are going to get something. We know going to a conference means that we have to compromise. That is what a conference is. But we are not going to do it with a gun to our head that says we are shutting government

down. We are going to conference over a short little 6-week CR? We have to deal with the longer term budget. We have asked many times to go to conference on that. We stand ready to go to work on making compromises for our long-term fiscal crisis. But tonight the only question that should be before the House of Representatives and the Senate is keeping our government open without a gun to anyone's head.

The Speaker should pass a clean CR, send it to the President, and tell Americans that we are not going to disrupt their lives in this country for the next 6 weeks while we work out the bigger agreement. That is what we need to be doing.

I urge the Speaker to step away from the precipice and have the government stay open. Don't put everybody's lives and communities in this country at risk and allow us to get to work to solve our next year's fiscal crisis before it is on us again.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I chair the Senate Appropriations Committee. It is a great honor. I am the one that would go to conference. Hey, I'm ready. However, a motion to tell us to meet in conference without a continuing funding resolution to keep the government open is a hollow gesture and a cynical gesture and a manipulative gesture. To say "have a conference," that means, myself, my Republican vice chairman, other conferees that would be appointed, we would sit down with the House conferees. By the way, we talk all the time. We started something new under my leadership, with the concurrence of Senator SHELBY, talking with the House. Do we want to meet in a conference? You bet. But to meet in a conference without the continuing funding resolution included in it means that the government shuts down at midnight without a continuing funding resolution to a date certain.

You can tell us to meet all you want, but the government will shut down. My whole point is to agree with my colleagues here that the House should take up what the Senate sent them. The Senate sent, in a gesture of comity and so on, a simple continuing resolution. Keep the government funded until November 15. This would give us opportunities to have that conference. We accepted their funding level, planning to negotiate a higher level. We had been waiting and waiting for Senator MURRAY to be able to go to conference on the budget so that we could arrive at this.

People might say: Senator MIKULSKI, I'm confused. MURRAY is the budget. You are appropriations. Are they not the same thing?

No. Senator MURRAY is the Budget Committee. That is the full revenue. That is the full Federal budget. It includes discretionary spending. I am one part of that. It includes mandatory

spending. That is Social Security, Medicare, veterans benefits, other mandatory spending. It also includes revenue which means that your books ultimately balance and you have a balance in your economy.

The Budget Committee's job is to arrive at that, working with the House. They then give us, the appropriators, something called a 302(a). It is a section in the Budget Act. That Budget Committee tells us, the appropriators, the cap that we can spend. The appropriators are neither free spenders nor freeloaders. We get a cap, a 302(a).

I have 12 subcommittees. Those 12 subcommittees, we divide them up in terms of what we think are the important investments that the country should make; that is into the 12 committees. Then they work with their Republican members to arrive at the subcommittees, and we bring them to the floor.

I have not had a top line. I have not had my cap, because she cannot go to conference. Remember those conferences everybody likes to have? So, had Senator MURRAY gone to a conference we would have had that number. But in the absence of that, I did something really bold. I took the Senate for its word.

This spring when the Budget Committee passed their 302(a) allocation, it would have been \$1.058 trillion. That is how we Senate appropriators, we Democrats, marked up our 12 bills. Some might say that is a lot of money. It sure is a lot of money, and we did a good job with it. We had smart public investments and every one of my subcommittees had the inspector general at their hearings so we could identify duplicative, dated or dysfunctional programs.

We are ready to cut. We know how to cut. We are ready to go, and every one of my subcommittees is ready to go. Am I ready to go to conference? You bet. But to go to conference without that continuing funding resolution is, again, a hollow action that once again wastes time and wastes opportunity.

It is not just those in our country who watch C-SPAN. The world watches C-SPAN. The world is watching us. This is the United States of America. They are watching our parliamentary system, which was once the greatest in the world. We have gone from being the greatest deliberative body to the greatest delaying body, and we delay through hollow gestures back and forth.

I want to do everything I can—working on a bipartisan basis—to maintain the greatness of America, but in order to do that, the greatness of America needs to work tonight. We need to come to our senses, come to an agreement, come to closure, and keep the government open. I am happy to go to the conference, but I would like a date certain. My preference is November 16. Keep the government open. Keep us in not only our job but keep America working.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DURBIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, so ordered.

IRAQ SPECIAL IMMIGRATION VISA EXTENSION

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to S. 1566, the Iraq special immigration visa extension.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1566) to extend the period during which Iraqis who were employed by the United States Government in Iraq may be granted special immigrant status and to temporarily increase the fee or surcharge for processing machine-readable nonimmigrant visas.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to the bill.

IRAQ SPECIAL IMMIGRANT VISA PROGRAM

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I rise today to discuss a small, but critical program that represents a test for this body and for this country: The Iraq Special Immigrant Visa program. It is a test of whether we stand behind our commitments abroad. It is a test of whether we help those who help us. And for others out there who might consider assisting the U.S., it is a test to see if we follow through on our promises. If we don't act now, the Iraq Special Immigrant Visa program will expire along with our obligation to thousands of Iraqis who risked their lives to help U.S. troops at war.

The latest version of the Iraq Special Immigrant Visa program was initiated by Congress in the fiscal year 2008 National Defense Authorization Act. It was originally designed to allow for certain foreign nationals in Iraq who served alongside U.S. forces to receive special visas to come live and work in the United States. The visa program was created to help secure a path out of harm's way for those Iraqis and their families that provided important skills to Americans, like translation services, and are now targeted because of their affiliation with us.

The Iraq visa program is currently set to expire today on September 30, 2013. Without action by the Congress to extend this program, thousands of Iraqi applicants, already under threat due to their faithful assistance and valuable service to the U.S. Government, will see consular work on their cases stopped and their dream of escaping the daily threat of violence will be suspended.

Even if we eventually decide to reauthorize the program at a later date, the

stoppage will result in delays of months or even years for these applicants as they completely restart an already long and overly arduous process. Many of these interpreters and assistants who risked their lives for Americans are now in hiding running from place to place to escape retribution attacks against them and their families, any delays could mean their lives.

Now, since I started working on this special immigrant visa issue, I have come across countless stories of bravery demonstrated by Iraqi interpreters who stand shoulder to shoulder fighting with our military men and women. My office has also heard directly from retired military officers who served alongside these Iraqis and are now fighting to get them out of Iraq to the safety of the United States. I would like to just briefly read a few excerpts from these tremendously inspiring stories:

From one retired Marine Corps captain:

I am a retired member of the U.S. Marine Corps, who served proudly in Iraq between 2004-2005. Among our tasks was conducting nightly kill and capture raids in Anbar Province . . . Our interpreter was our lifeline to the local population . . . He became an invaluable member of our team, and our close friend . . . Because of his nearly four years of service to U.S. forces in Iraq, he was left imperiled and at risk of death at the hands of Iraqi militia . . . We came to trust him and treat him as one of our own.

From a Marine Corps infantry officer who did two tours in Iraq:

I owe my life and the lives of my Marines to [my translator] . . . During high intensity combat operations throughout the second Battle of Fallujah, [he] constantly put his life in danger to protect Marines and civilians . . . Over the course of that deployment, [he] not only served heroically alongside Marines, but he also became a second father and a close friend.

From that same marine:

I have had the opportunity to meet many other Iraqi refugees. They represent the best of our Nation. They chose to put themselves in harm's way because they have always believed in what our country is supposed to stand for . . . They are eager to share in the American dream and to contribute in meaningful ways on the home front as they did overseas. They've earned that opportunity.

I could not agree more. But, unfortunately, thousands of Iraqis who have earned the chance to come to the United States might not make it, and simply because we failed to act. That is unacceptable.

Now, a number of Members on both sides of the aisle, including myself, have been working hard for the last 6 months to find a way to extend this critical program. Senators MCCAIN, LEAHY, GRAHAM, LEVIN, DURBIN, and others have been champions of this effort. We have extensions of this program in the comprehensive immigration bill, the current version of the National Defense Authorization Act, and in the annual State Department appropriations bill. Unfortunately, none of these will be signed into law by the deadline.

I was hoping that the House of Representatives would include an extension in their original continuing resolution legislation, but, unfortunately, they did not, leaving the Senate with few procedural opportunities to include it. However, we may have a second chance here in the hours ahead, and I would urge my colleagues in the House and Senate to find a way to extend this program.

Now, there is no doubt that the administration needs to do more to actually process the visa applications. The stories we are hearing about the backlog are entirely inexcusable. Applicants ought to be able to cut through the redtape and bureaucratic nightmare to get their visas processed quickly and more efficiently, while still ensuring proper vetting and background checks. However, we have no hopes of improving the program if we don't extend it.

We have a responsibility to fulfill our obligation to the thousands of civilians who risked their lives to help our country during a time of war. The contributions that Iraqi and Afghan civilians made to our military efforts have been tremendous. Those who served as translators were an invaluable resource and ally to our men and women in uniform. We can't turn our back on them now, particularly as terrorist organizations target these civilians for retribution. We made a promise to Iraqi civilians and now we must honor it.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the bill be read three times and passed and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The bill (S. 1566) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time and passed, as follows:

S. 1566

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT-TERM EXTENSION OF SPECIAL IMMIGRANT PROGRAM.

Section 1244(c)(3) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (8 U.S.C. 1157 note) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(C) FISCAL YEAR 2014.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clauses (ii) and (iii), the total number of principal aliens who may be provided special immigrant status under this section during the first 3 months of fiscal year 2014 shall be the sum of—

“(I) the number of aliens described in subsection (b) whose application for special immigrant status under this section is pending on September 30, 2013; and

“(II) 2,000.

“(ii) EMPLOYMENT PERIOD.—The 1-year period during which the principal alien is required to have been employed by or on behalf of the United States Government in Iraq under subsection (b)(1)(B) shall begin on or after March 20, 2003, and end on or before September 30, 2013.

“(iii) APPLICATION DEADLINE.—The principal alien seeking special immigrant status under this subparagraph shall apply to the Chief of Mission in accordance with sub-

section (b)(4) not later than December 31, 2013.”.

SEC. 2. TEMPORARY FEE INCREASE FOR CERTAIN CONSULAR SERVICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of State, not later than January 1, 2014, shall increase the fee or surcharge authorized under section 140(a) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995 (Public Law 103-236; 8 U.S.C. 1351 note) by \$1 for processing machine-readable non-immigrant visas and machine-readable combined border crossing identification cards and nonimmigrant visas.

(b) DEPOSIT OF AMOUNTS.—Notwithstanding section 140(a)(2) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995 (Public Law 103-236; 8 U.S.C. 1351 note), the additional amount collected pursuant to the fee increase authorized under subsection (a) shall be deposited in the general fund of the Treasury.

(c) SUNSET PROVISION.—The fee increase authorized under subsection (a) shall terminate on the date that is 2 years after the first date on which such increased fee is collected.

Mr. REID. Madam President, this is so important. People who worked with our military in Iraq as interpreters and doing other things that were essential are now targets in the civil war that is going on in Iraq. Some of them have been wanting to leave for 2 years, and this will allow them to do that. I am so glad we are able to extend this.

Every day these people who helped us are subject to arrest, being killed, as are their families. It is so important we did this.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I wish to say a few words to try to reflect what I think tens of millions of Americans are feeling at 11:25 tonight with the threat of a government shutdown in 35 minutes.

What I want to say is that this discussion is not about ObamaCare at all. What this discussion, debate, and conflict is about is that our Republican friends in the House are trying to annul the elections that took place last November. Some of them were shocked that Obama won and that he won by 5 million votes. They haven't gotten over it. They were shocked they lost two seats in the Senate. They haven't gotten over that. They were shocked they lost some seats in the House.

What they are saying to the American people tonight is: Maybe we lost the Presidential election. Maybe we lost seats in the Senate and in the House. It doesn't matter. We can now bring the government to a shutdown, throw some 800,000 hard-working Americans out on the street, and we are going to get our way no matter what.

I think that is a horrendous precedent to be established for this body. Let's be clear. If we surrendered to that hostage-taking tonight, without a shadow of a doubt these guys would be back 2 weeks from today. At that point they would say to us: Here is our laun-

dry list of demands. If you don't give us what we want, we are going to bring down the financial system of the United States of America, bring down the world financial system, and if it leads to a worldwide recession, well, that is the way it goes. But what is most important is we get our way and we don't care about the repercussions.

Next year I can see these same guys coming to the floor of the House and saying: You know what. We want to abolish Social Security. We think Social Security is a bad idea, and if you don't allow us to do that, we are going to stop the government again. And on and on it goes.

Ultimately, what we are dealing with tonight is an extraordinarily antidemocratic act. Every Member of the Senate has strong feelings. Sometimes we win, sometimes we lose. But when they are in the minority—they do not control the White House, they do not control the Senate—they cannot force the American people to give them what they want.

The irony is that because we have folks in the Republican Party in the House who believe we should abolish Social Security, end Medicare as we know it, privatize the VA, eliminate the Environmental Protection Agency—they do not believe that the function of government is to protect the interests of the vast majority of the people. So these guys are sitting and saying: My God. The government may shut down. What a great idea.

If you don't believe the EPA should protect us from pollution, then isn't it a good idea that we not have an EPA starting tomorrow? If you don't believe in veterans health care, isn't it a good idea that we should slow down the processing of veterans' claims?

So for these guys who do not believe that in a democratic, civilized society we should have a government which represents the people, then from their point of view what is happening is, in fact, quite good.

What particularly angers me, and why the American people have such contempt for what we are doing in Washington is as we speak—everybody knows this—the middle class in this country is disappearing. The Census Bureau study came out last week—if you can believe this—median family income, that family right in the middle of American society, is earning less money today than it earned 24 years ago. All of the increases in technology and productivity doesn't mean anything.

Poverty is at 46.5 million, and that is highest on record. Youth unemployment is 20 percent. Real unemployment is 14 percent. What do the American people want us to be doing? Everybody knows what they want us to do. Every poll gives us the answer.

They want us to start creating the millions of jobs this economy desperately needs. They want us to raise the minimum wage because they know millions of people in this country cannot make it on \$8 or \$9 an hour. They

want us to improve our crumbling infrastructure, our roads, our bridges, and our wastewater plants. They want us to bring about real tax reform. One out of four major corporations today is not paying a nickel in taxes, and they want us to change that as well.

In my view, for the future of this country, we cannot allow a handful of rightwing extremists to hold this Nation hostage. The American people have to stand tall and tell them that, yes, in a democratic society, people have differences of opinion. Yes, we can make improvements in ObamaCare. But we don't go forward by trying to destroy or bring the U.S. Government to a halt.

I think it is important for the American people now to stand and demand democracy here in Washington, and tell a handful of rightwing extremists they cannot get their way by holding this government in a hijacked manner.

With that, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, do I need to request a specific amount of time in which to speak? Are we under any rules?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Senators are permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I appreciate the opportunity to express my feelings this evening.

Quite frankly, I was one of the optimists in this body. Many of my colleagues have been saying the determination to run our economy over a cliff is so powerful, we are going to end up with a government shutdown. I kept saying, I don't think so. I think in this Senate and across the Capitol in the House there are reasonable folks who know that this type of brinkmanship is doing intense damage to our Nation, and I don't believe we will end up there. So here is my faith in the common sense of a collection of 435 Members of the House and 100 Members of the Senate—my faith in their reasonableness. Apparently, that faith has been misplaced, because we are now just 27 minutes away from a government shutdown. And to what point?

We have just heard from the House leadership they want to have a conference discussion over the budget. Well, certainly, so do we. Six months ago, we passed a budget. The Senate passed a budget. We sought to have a conference committee to resolve those two budgets as a common foundation for a set of spending bills—our appropriations bills—and our Republican colleagues blocked that budget conference committee. They have come to this floor 18 times and blocked the dialogue necessary to take the conversation forward over our budget and spending plan. That is what led us here tonight. The obstruction didn't start a week ago or 2 weeks ago; it started 6 months ago, in not allowing a common conversation.

I am deeply disturbed about the profound dysfunction that now grips this

body. I first came to the Senate when I was 19 years old as an intern for Senator Hatfield. When legislation was brought up, it would be debated, there would be a simple majority vote; sometimes we won, sometimes we lost. We then send a bill over to the House. Then we have a conference committee and we get on with things. We make decisions. We test ideas. Sometimes those ideas work well and we keep them and sometimes they don't work so well, and we either amend them or throw them out or the public says, the bums who brought us those ideas that didn't work, we will throw them out. We had a completion of the democratic circle.

We don't have that completion now because we can't have a simple majority vote. Our colleagues have so abused the filibuster process; the courtesy of letting everyone have their say is to never let us get to a final up-or-down vote. So instead of 12 appropriations bills being passed year after year after year, we have zero this year. We only had one in 2011–2012, only one.

Citizens across the country are seeing this and saying, what is wrong with the Senate and what is wrong with the House? The House has its own form of supermajority: the Hastert rule. They are saying, We are not going to put on the floor things we know will pass unless they belong to the ideology of the far right, because we know that right now, if the Speaker of the House wants to put on the floor of the House the bill passed by the Senate—a clean, simple extension of a continuing resolution—it would be adopted. The leadership does not believe in allowing a vote in that Chamber, just as a minority of colleagues here in this Chamber have blocked us from having a simple majority vote time and time again.

We need to have a more substantial conversation about how to make both Chambers work better. But in the near term we have to find a path in which we stop careening from crisis to crisis.

Let's say, in the final 23 minutes now before midnight, that we were able to find an answer to pass a continuing resolution. Let's say we were able to do that. Is there no harm done? Well, I wish that were the case, because there has been a lot of harm done; because what businesses know across America is that this process of brinkmanship, of hostage-taking, of threatening to throw the economy over the cliff is happening time and time and time again. Already, Members on the House side are saying, Well, let's not only make these arguments tonight, let's make them in a couple of weeks over the debt ceiling. The debt ceiling—the decision on whether to pay the bills we have already incurred; the decision on whether to honor the good faith and credit of the United States of America.

President Reagan spoke on this multiple times, telling folks, We don't mess with the good faith and credit of the United States. His team undoubtedly recognized that when we do so, we

raise the interest rates, we endanger the dollar as a reserve currency, we weaken our purchasing power around the world, and we do deep damage. But that reasonableness, that common sense that we don't take hostages and we don't threaten to destroy the economy that is going to hurt the middle class is gone.

I live in a working class community. Folks don't have a lot of savings. They have been hit hard. They lost a lot of their savings in the 2008 meltdown, a meltdown that came from deregulatory actions, that allowed predatory mortgages and securities based on predatory mortgages. They know that governance matters. They know we could create a lot of jobs if we could pass those bills for low-interest loans, for energy saving renovations that would put a huge amount of the construction industry back to work. That bill passed here in the Senate, but the House hasn't taken it up. They haven't passed it.

They know we would have a lot more jobs if we invested in infrastructure. China is spending 10 percent of their GDP on infrastructure. Europe is spending 5 percent of their GDP on infrastructure. And what are we spending here in America? We are spending 2 percent—not enough to repair the infrastructure that is wearing out across America, that needs replacing, let alone establishing infrastructure for the next generation. In a 10-year period, 2 trips to China, I saw Beijing go from bicycles to a bullet train. That is what happens when a society spends 10 percent of GDP on infrastructure. We build the economy of tomorrow for the generation of tomorrow that is going to thrive in that city.

When we underinvest, we imperil the future. When we underinvest in education, we imperil the future of our kids, and we are certainly underinvesting in education. But for each of these policy issues we have to be taking on, we can't succeed if a small number in the Senate and in the House can paralyze this process, can go to extraordinary lengths to basically hold hostage and damage the United States of America.

This process must end. The Senator from Vermont who spoke a few moments ago said, If we yield to this hostage-taking now, we will see it time and time and time again in the future. We will see the threat to end Social Security, et cetera. Well, we are not going to go in that direction.

The House has said they want a conference. Great. Let's not do so at the same time we are taking down the economy. So put the Senate resolution on the floor of the House right now, with 20 minutes left, give it an up-or-down vote, pass that bill so that we have just these few short weeks, from now until November 15, to hold that conference and to work out a deal without taking the American economy down with ObamaCare.

We wait for common sense and reasonableness to return to a dialogue so

that we can have a legislative process the American people can believe in, because we are tackling the big problems facing America. But as of tonight, with now 18 minutes to go, we do not have that process, and that must change.

Mr. LEVIN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. MERKLEY. Yes, absolutely.

Mr. LEVIN. The Senator just made a reference to the fact that the Speaker of the House has refused to put the Senate resolution up for a vote in the House of Representatives. It seems to me this has not been adequately illuminated to the public. It is not just that we insist that there be a clean CR—which we do, because we don't want every other issue that people feel passionate about to be insisted upon as the price of keeping the government going. Each one of us has issues we feel very passionately about. But I don't know any of us—at least on this side—who have said that unless we pass, for instance, an infrastructure bill—unless we pass a bill that includes background checks for people before they can buy an assault weapon—I feel very passionately about that. But the idea that we or any of us on this side of the aisle would say the government is going to close unless we get our way on a particular issue that we feel passionate about is absolutely anathema to us. Nonetheless, there are a few folks who are willing to do that.

But when we say we insist we have a clean CR—in other words, that it not be linked to some issue that some faction is insisting upon—what we are really saying is something even deeper than that, more basic. We simply want them to vote on a clean CR. We are very confident it will pass if there is a vote, because it will have bipartisan support.

For some reason over in the House, bipartisan support for a bill is now anathema. Apparently, it is called the Hastert rule. The Republican leaders over there say they are not going to pass any bill that relies upon any Democratic votes, which is the exact opposite of what bipartisanship should be. Over here, we rely on votes from both sides of the aisle for just about everything we pass. But over there they have this policy now, which is the most partisan kind of policy one could imagine. If someone could design a partisan policy, it would be, We will not have any reliance on the other party for votes; only our party can be relied upon for votes. We are not going to pass anything which depends upon the other party. That, to me, reeks of partisanship. Whenever I hear the Speaker or any of the Republicans in the House talk about bipartisanship, the first thing they ought to do is get rid of the Hastert rule, because the Hastert rule guarantees partisanship. It bakes partisanship into the process over there.

But back to the narrow point I wish to ask the Senator about: Tonight, as in previous nights, all we are saying is not just we insist upon a clean CR,

which is not linked to some faction's passion, which in this case is getting rid of ObamaCare; what we are saying is vote on the Senate CR. Just put it up for a vote. We are confident it will pass. But does the Senator agree it is even something less than saying it must be a clean CR that we are insisting upon? What we are saying is, vote on a clean CR. We are very confident it will pass, but put it up for a vote. Does the Senator agree with that?

Mr. MERKLEY. Absolutely. I appreciate the point the Senator is accentuating. When the Senator says this has not gotten enough attention, he is absolutely right. The House has refused to have a budget resolution pursued—a continuing resolution that does not have extraneous policy attached to it. They have absolutely said they will not take the Senate version, which did not put on the things the Senator and I might wish to attach, and did not put on the things my colleagues from across the aisle might wish to attach. It said: Let's keep the government open. Let's keep it operating, using, by the way, the budget number proposed by our colleagues in the House.

So if our colleagues in the House say, wouldn't it be great if the Senate would compromise with us, well, we went farther than a compromise. We did not say: Let's split the difference between the Senate number and the House number. We will take their number. And let's get rid of these extraneous policy issues and then put it up for a vote. I think it is a simple request to make.

Doesn't it make sense to give a bipartisan group the opportunity now, with just 14 minutes left, to actually end this process of driving our economy over a cliff?

Mr. LEVIN. At least vote as to whether to do it.

Mr. MERKLEY. At least have that vote.

Mr. LEVIN. Is it also not true that we have voted twice on the House continuing resolution? We have rejected it, but we voted on it.

Mr. MERKLEY. My colleague is exactly right. They sent it to us and we voted on it.

Mr. LEVIN. All right. They have not voted once on what we have sent to them.

Mr. MERKLEY. The Senator is right.

Mr. LEVIN. That is not something you have to go to conference about. That is something which is sort of kind of fundamental. We have voted twice on your proposal. We have rejected it. You refused to vote on a Senate proposal. Why? Because you are afraid it will pass with some Democratic votes. That is anathema to the House of Representatives Republican leadership now to pass legislation that depends upon Democratic votes. And at the same time they talk about bipartisanship, they have that fixed, rigid rule that they will not depend on Democratic votes to get something passed in the House of Representatives. The first

step toward bipartisanship in the House would be to end that approach.

But I thank my friend from Oregon. It is amazing to me that the refusal of the House of Representatives to even vote on the Senate proposal which we sent to them has had such little play in the media because I think if the public understood that, they would then—without any doubt—instead of it being 60 to 30 that it is the Republicans who are bringing this government to the brink of closing down, it would be 80 to 10, when the public understands that it is the refusal of the Republican leadership in the House of Representatives to allow a vote on the Senate proposal.

Mr. MERKLEY. Yes.

Mr. LEVIN. I thank my good friend. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, we are at the verge of the midnight hour here, and what is playing out is a challenge to the very essence of our government, and it is a challenge both at home and abroad. I will speak to that in a moment.

I was in the other body, in the House of Representatives, 17 years ago when we had the last government shutdown, led at that time by the Republican majority in the House of Representatives. I had thought they learned the consequences to the Nation and to their party as a result of such a shutdown. But it seems those memories have faded.

Now we are on the verge of a consequence that is consequential to the lives of American families, consequential to the economy of the country, consequential to the message we send across the globe.

What I cannot understand is the fixation that our Republican colleagues have on the question of the Affordable Care Act, which they derisively call ObamaCare. It is something that was passed by the Congress, signed by the President, reaffirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court, which is the final voice of what is the law of the land, and then reaffirmed by the American people in their reelection of the President with a significant majority.

There were two candidates in that election. One was President Obama, who said: I intend to fully implement the Affordable Care Act and create millions of opportunities for those who have no insurance—to control costs; to end preexisting conditions as a limitation; to ultimately ensure that children could stay on their parents' insurance to the age of 26; to be able to provide millions of dollars of relief across the landscape of the country; to help senior citizens who often chose between putting food on the table, keeping their home, or having access to

lifesaving, life-enhancing drugs, by getting a doughnut hole—that gap in coverage for seniors—to be ultimately eliminated. It has provided tremendous relief for the seniors in our country not to have to make those dynamic choices.

So what they could not achieve at the ballot box they are trying to achieve by shutting down the Federal Government.

And then, at this late hour, after having tried a series of times to undermine the Affordable Care Act—and believe me, when they talk about a 1-year delay, which they seem to try to show that it is benign, it is not benign. There is a purpose to their strategy. The reason that a 1-year delay—in addition to the fact that the law should be able to move forward for millions who have no insurance to be able to finally have insurance—is because if you delay the mandate, that means 11 million people will go uninsured who otherwise would get coverage. It means, as the Congressional Budget Office estimated—the nonpartisan entity of the Congress that scores everything we do: Is this going to cost money; is this going to save money—they estimated that repealing that individual mandate will increase premiums anywhere between 15 to 20 percent because fewer healthy people will enroll to balance out those with higher medical needs. Insurance is about spreading the risk across the spectrum.

In my home State of New Jersey, we tried to have insurance reform that limited preexisting condition exclusions and different premium band ratings without an individual requirement for coverage. The result was skyrocketing premiums. So, in essence, delaying the mandate for a year—which is the essence of what the House Republicans have sent here various times as a condition of keeping the government open—is a Trojan horse because Republicans know that, in doing such a delay, the mandate will create higher premiums. And in creating those higher premiums, they, in essence, create rate shock and they fulfill that which they would like to see, which is the failure of the Affordable Care Act.

They have a very particular strategy. It is not benign by any stretch of the imagination. They are not concerned that the Affordable Care Act will fail. They are concerned it will actually succeed. So what they seek to do is to introduce poison pills to make it fail.

It is amazing to me that I keep hearing: Well, we will replace it. With what? We have not heard with what. When we challenge our colleagues, they say: Oh, yes, preexisting conditions, we are for that, making sure that does not exist anymore. We are for the seniors getting the rebates on prescription drugs. We are for making sure there are no more lifetime caps on anybody's insurance, so if they have a catastrophic illness, they will not come up against that cap. We are for all of those things. The only problem is, to have all

of those benefits which Americans overwhelmingly want, it costs money. And the only way to do that is, of course, to have everybody ultimately insured in the country.

This is not a fight between Democrats and Republicans. This is a battle for the very soul of the Republican Party. Unfortunately, they are playing it out in a way that affects the Nation. This is a designed strategy.

Jonathan Chait of New York magazine wrote a tremendous piece. I recommend it to all of my colleagues. He basically described a meeting that took place in January of this year. I am going to read from his article for a moment: "In January, demoralized House Republicans retreated to Williamsburg, Virginia, to plot out their legislative strategy for President Obama's second term. Conservatives were angry that their leaders had been unable to stop a whole series of things, including the Bush tax cuts on high incomes, and they wanted to make sure their leaders would no longer have any further compromises. Not only did they decide they would not have any further compromises, but, in fact, they developed a legislative strategy."

Before I go into that, I am happy to yield to the majority leader who I understand has an announcement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, through you to my dear friend from New Jersey, who does such a wonderful job in everything he does, especially running the Foreign Relations Committee, I thank him for yielding to me.

This is a very sad day for our country. The President has told the head of the Office of Management and Budget, Sylvia Mathews Burwell, to issue a shutdown statement, and she has done that. Here it is: "MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES."

This memorandum follows the September 17 memo and provides an update on the potential lapse of appropriations.

No more potential. It is after midnight.

Appropriations provided under the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act expire at 11:59 pm tonight. Unfortunately, we do not have a clear indication that Congress will act in time for the President to sign the continuing resolution before the end of the day tomorrow, October, 2013. Therefore, agencies should now execute plans for shutdown due to the absence of appropriations.

That is what she said. So the agencies of government are in the process of closing down. It now appears that the House is not going to do anything to keep the government from shutting down. They have some jerry-rigged thing about going to conference. It is embarrassing that these people who are elected to represent the country are representing the tea party, the anarchists of the country, and a majority of the Republicans in the House are following every step of the way.

This is an unnecessary blow to America, to the economy, the middle class,

everyone. The House has within their power the ability to avoid a shutdown. They should simply pass the 6-week CR we sent them.

We are going to come in in the morning and see what they have done sometime tonight. But I would hope they would understand that, within their power, at any time, all they have to do is accept what we already passed. All this stuff they keep sending over here—they are so fixated on embarrassing our President, the President of the United States. They think an election is coming this November. It happened last November. He was elected by 5 million votes over what Romney got—5 million votes. It was not close. So it is really too bad.

I am going to ask this unanimous consent. We are going to go out tonight and come back at 9:30 in the morning. So the unanimous consent is that we are going to recess until 9:30 tomorrow morning. I want the Senators who are here on the floor to be able to talk for 5 minutes each.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2013

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 Tuesday, October 1, 2013; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in day; that at that time, I be recognized; that the Senate recess from 12:30 to 2:15 tomorrow to allow for the weekly caucus meetings.

I ask, before this is implemented, that everyone understand that when we receive that message from the House—I hope we will have it in the morning when we come in—I will make a motion to table it as we have done the two other measures in the last few hours.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. REID. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that following the statements of Senators MENENDEZ, DURBIN, MURRAY, and SCHUMER, the Senate adjourn under the previous order.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. Would the leader yield for a question?

Mr. REID. Sure.

Mr. SCHUMER. I just ask the leader, the government is shut down. There is nothing we can do to keep it open. The only way to keep the government open would be for the House to pass the resolution we have already sent them; is that correct?

Mr. REID. That is right. It keeps the government funded. They have had that for days now. They could do it,

with the way they vote, in a matter of 10 minutes.

Mr. SCHUMER. But nothing we can do?

Mr. REID. Nothing we can do. They are over there now negotiating with themselves, I guess.

Mr. SCHUMER. Is it not true that until they vote for that resolution, the government will remain shut? They could send us 100 different little doodads, gizmos, and other things, but the ball is in their court, and we hope and wish that they would pass our resolution and that we keep the government open.

Mr. REID. It is in their court and has been in their court.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I had hoped we would not get to this point. I believe that where I was headed is to embody why we have come to this moment today. It just did not happen. I was referring to this article by Jonathan Chait of New York Magazine that in January the House Republicans met, retreated to Williamsburg, VA, and came up with a strategy.

What is that strategy? He goes on to say:

The first element of that strategy is a kind of legislative strike. House Republicans initially decided to boycott all direct negotiations with President Obama, and then subsequently extended that boycott to negotiations with the Democratic Senate—

Which only goes to prove why, despite having passed a budget 6 months ago or over 6 months ago, each of the 18 times that Senator MURRAY, the budget chair, has asked to go to a conference—which is a meeting of the House of Representatives and the Senate to work out their differences in their budget—there have been objections.

So when I read this article and see that House Republicans decided to boycott all direct negotiations with President Obama and then subsequently extended that boycott to negotiations with the Democratic Senate—we are seeing the consequences of that strategy here today.

This kind of refusal—he says in his article that “to even enter negotiations is highly unusual.” The way to make sense of it is that Republicans have planned since January to force Obama to accede to large chunks of the Republican agenda without Republicans having to offer any policy concessions of their own.

It is pretty interesting. You know, for those who said: Well, both sides, the reality is that there is no moral equivalency to shutting down the government. If you are willing to use the tools of shutting down the government in order to elicit what you could not achieve by winning at the ballot box—i.e. getting a Republican President elected, both Houses of the Congress—then you could ultimately repeal a law

with which you disagreed. But since you could not do it that way, to have a policy that ultimately says: No, we are willing to shut down the government in order to achieve what we could not do at the ballot box with the will of the American people, there is no moral equivalency. So it cannot be accepted that both sides are to blame when clearly only one side is willing to pursue their political goals by closing down the government and the consequences that flow from that.

It is an interesting article. I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD so that all of my colleagues might be able to read it.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

(Jonathan writes for NY Magazine.)

In January, demoralized House Republicans retreated to Williamsburg, Virginia, to plot out their legislative strategy for President Obama's second term. Conservatives were angry that their leaders had been unable to stop the expiration of the Bush tax cuts on high incomes, and sought assurances from their leaders that no further compromises would be forthcoming. The agreement that followed, which Republicans called “The Williamsburg Accord,” received obsessive coverage in the conservative media but scant attention in the mainstream press. (The phrase “Williamsburg Accord” has appeared once in the Washington Post and not at all in the New York Times.)

But the decision House Republicans made in January has set the party on the course it has followed since. If you want to grasp why Republicans are careening toward a potential federal government shutdown, and possibly toward provoking a sovereign debt crisis after that, you need to understand that this is the inevitable product of a conscious party strategy. Just as Republicans responded to their 2008 defeat by moving farther right, they responded to the 2012 defeat by moving right yet again. Since they had begun from a position of total opposition to the entire Obama agenda, the newer rightward lurch took the form of trying to wrest concessions from Obama by provoking a series of crises.

The first element of the strategy is a kind of legislative strike. Initially, House Republicans decided to boycott all direct negotiations with President Obama, and then subsequently extended that boycott to negotiations with the Democratic Senate. (Senate Democrats have spent months pleading with House Republicans to negotiate with them, to no avail.) This kind of refusal to even enter negotiations is highly unusual. The way to make sense of it is that Republicans have planned since January to force Obama to accede to large chunks of the Republican agenda, without Republicans having to offer any policy concessions of their own.

Republicans have thrashed this way and that throughout the year. Republicans have fallen out, often sharply, over which hostages to ransom, with the most conservative ones favoring a government shutdown threat and the more pragmatic wing, oddly, endorsing a debt default threat. They have also struggled to define the terms of their ransom. The Williamsburg Accord initially envisioned forcing Obama to sign spending cuts, or some form of the Paul Ryan budget. During the summer, Republicans flirted with making Obama lock in lower marginal tax rates. Recently, Republicans settled on pressuring him to kill his health-care law. But the general contours of the legislative strike, and the plan of obtaining policy vic-

tories without offering any policy concessions, has enjoyed general agreement within the party.

The history is important because much of the news coverage and centrist commentary has leaned heavily on the idea that the crises in Washington have come about because of some nebulous failure of bipartisanship. The Washington Post editorial page implores both sides to compromise, without explaining why only one party should have to offer policy concessions to keep the government running. Mark Halperin neatly implies that the two sides share the blame in equal measure.

The analytic error here is the assumption by professional pox-on-both-housers that they can take an advocacy position on the government shutdown without siding with one of the parties. If you want to land on the conclusion that both sides are to blame, you need to equivocate on the underlying moral question of whether a shutdown is really a bad thing. If, on the other hand, you want to take a stance against crisis governance, you need to be honest about the fact that one party is pursuing this as a conscious strategy.

Mr. MENENDEZ. This is a battle within the Republican party itself about where they are headed. It is a battle that is totally unnecessary because I think there is a simple message to the Speaker: Allow the House of Representatives to have an up-or-down vote on what the Senate has sent it, which is basically a clean continuation of the government without any gimmicks, without any poison pills.

If that vote were allowed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives on the floor of the House of Representatives, I believe it would pass and the government would stay open. Instead, a few within the Republican Party who hatched this concoction in January of this year when they lost the elections and retreated to figure out what was going to be their legislative strategy are bringing the Nation to its knees.

That is simply unacceptable.

I said at the beginning of these comments that it is not only consequential here at home—and it will be consequential—to many families, to those who are Federal employees, and their families, to those who seek the assistance of the Federal Government, whether that is a small business loan, whether it is somebody for the first time enrolling for Social Security payments or a veteran's disability or a whole host of other things; they will not be able to do it if the government is going to be shut down tomorrow—it is also a consequence in the world. I say that as chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. What message do we send to the world when, in fact, we cannot get our own budget done and one party is willing to hold the Nation hostage in order to get their political views pursued?

We are trying to convince Iran not to pursue nuclear weapons. We tell Iran if you disarm totally and stop your nuclear weapons program, then sanctions to you can be lifted. I believe the Iranians are looking and saying is it possible that such an agreement could

ever be delivered by the Congress of the United States, if we do actually disarm, if we end all of our nuclear weapons program, if we do everything that the Security Council has asked of us. Would the United States lift the series of sanctions that they have ultimately passed upon us?

This Congress cannot agree with the President. When I say this Congress, I speak of the Republican Congress and the House of Representatives.

It is a dangerous message in the world. We tell other nations that we believe they have to abide by certain disciplines, and yet we cannot ultimately keep our own budget open and the Nation and this government functioning.

I think this is the ultimate extortion. I believe that since this is by design, not by chance, it is going to have real consequences for our Nation. There is no doubt that if there is a prolonged shutdown, it will be consequential to our economy. It will be consequential to the gross domestic product.

We saw that 17 years ago. It will be consequential to not only Wall Street but to Main Street in terms of their confidence as to how to move forward. This economy is in recovery. The last thing it needs is a body blow by its own government as it tries to continue to grow an economy in which more people can be employed.

The consequence of Republicans doing this is more than a government shutdown, it is increasingly an economic shutdown. This is simply something that we should not accept.

Finally, to send us a resolution after 6 months of trying to go to a conference, 18 different petitions and motions on this floor to go to a conference, to go to that simple meeting that might have reconciled these differences that were objected to by certain Republicans within this chairman—and now to say you are going to send us a motion to go to conference when you have shut down the government and, therefore, have a gun at our head in order to be able to try to negotiate the critical issues that might be negotiated—is simply unacceptable. They already have a legislative victory.

We have accepted an amount in the temporary budget that is less than what we devised in the Senate budget, \$80 billion less. Yet that is not satisfactory to them.

This is not about the economics. This is about their drive to kill the Affordable Care Act in a way that undermines the health and quality of opportunity for millions of Americans who finally don't have to worry about pre-existing conditions. They don't have to worry about lifetime caps, can keep their children on their insurance until the age of 26, and can get millions of dollars across the landscape of the country for seniors to reduce prescription drug costs, that finally controls costs in this Nation. Their fear is not

that it won't work. Their fear is that it will succeed and in doing so will undermine the very essence of what they have been against all along.

That is a hard way to pursue a political tactic as a consequence of the Nation's laws. This is what is going on here today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. SCHUMER. We are in, as has been said by Leader REID and my good friend from New Jersey, an unfortunate moment. There are millions of people who are innocent. They wake up in the morning, work hard, and hope to get a paycheck to help feed and clothe their families. They will not be getting a paycheck tomorrow morning.

They might be Federal Government workers. I have heard some of my colleagues on the other side demonize the Federal Government. When I think of the Federal Government, I think of individual people who are working hard, who show up at work in the rain and the snow, who work hard, as do people in the private sector, people who work for State governments or such as the people who work for us. Why should they be punished?

Then there are so many others, such as the veteran who needs a change in his or her disability formula and can't get it; the construction worker who is working on a federally funded highway, or somebody who works in a defense plant, as a civilian, all of these people now have been put at real risk.

There is an answer, as I mentioned in my colloquy with the leader. The answer is for the House to pass the bill that passed here—the key vote had a majority of Democrats and Republicans, 25 Republicans—and keep the government running.

They are busy working late at night on another little subterfuge, a little scheme. Have a conference.

As the leader said, conferences are fine with us. We tried to do a budget conference 18 times. Don't do a conference as a charade while you are shutting the government down. That is what the other side is asking us to do.

Let's modify what they are doing. Let them pass the bill that is now in the House that will keep the government running until November 15, and then we will have a conference on how to fund the government for another year.

Make no mistake about it. Tomorrow morning their next gambit will be defeated in the Senate and then we will be back where we were, where we are now.

There is a bill, a ready bill, in the House of Representatives that can keep the government funded and prevent these millions of innocent people and our national economy from being hurt and hurt significantly.

This is a final plea, at 12:15 a.m., 15 minutes after the government has been officially closed. House Members, Speaker BOEHNER, let the bill come up

for a vote. It will pass. It will save such trouble, and, even worse. For millions of innocent Americans it will save our economy from great risk. Then we can go back to debating the many issues that you and we wish to debate.

With that, with a bit of a heavy heart because it didn't have to happen, that we have a small group of people who are so sure that they are right that they can hurt millions to pursue that righteousness, that self-righteousness, is a bad thing. I hope it doesn't happen again.

I yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

SYRIA

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, last Friday I was reading the press reports about the remarkable progress that has taken place at the United Nations in obtaining a legally binding resolution, with the support of Russia and the other members of the Security Council, to eliminate Syria's chemical weapons. I could not help but compare it to what has been happening here in the Congress over the past week and a half.

While Secretary of State Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov have worked diligently to reach a historic agreement to destroy one of the world's largest arsenals of poison gas, the Congress has been consumed by political theater, debating an utterly pointless, politically motivated, doomed attempt to defund the Affordable Care Act. In doing so we are now perilously close to a shutdown of the Federal government that will cause untold damage to innumerable programs on which States, municipalities, and every community and family in this country depend and cost the taxpayers far more than if the government stays open.

Ironically, while just 2 weeks ago Congress was on the verge of authorizing a military attack against Syria, some of the most vocal advocates of an attack are the same Members who are toying with a government shutdown that could make it harder for the United States to help implement the U.N. resolution to destroy Syria's chemical weapons. If the government stops functioning, it will no longer be able to pay the salaries of our diplomats, nor to provide the funds to help pay for the weapons inspectors and the removal and destruction of the weapons.

I commend President Obama, Secretary Kerry, and our new U.N. Ambassador Samantha Power for their extraordinary efforts. We should also recognize the indispensable cooperation of Minister Lavrov and his government. While it will be many months before we know if this agreement will be faithfully implemented and achieve its goals in Syria, it is a dramatic step forward.

I also commend President Obama and Secretary Kerry for their efforts to

seize on the positive overtures by the new President of Iran. Again, it is too soon to say where this may lead, but if there is a chance of resolving diplomatically and verifiably the issue of Iran's nuclear program, it would be a monumental achievement.

I ask unanimous consent that Ambassador Power's remarks at the U.N. last Thursday be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR SAMANTHA POWER, U.S. PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE SECURITY COUNCIL STAKEOUT FOLLOWING CONSULTATIONS ON SYRIA, SEPTEMBER 26, 2013

"Just two weeks ago, tonight's outcome seemed utterly unimaginable. Two weeks ago the Syrian regime had not even acknowledged the existence of its chemical weapons stockpiles. But tonight we have a shared draft resolution that is the outcome of intense diplomacy and negotiations over the past two weeks.

Our overarching goal was and remains the rapid and total elimination of Syria's chemical weapons program. This is a class of weapons that the world has already judged must be banned because their use is simply too horrific. This is a fundamental belief shared by the United States, all members of the Security Council and 98% of the world.

Tonight, the Council discussed a draft resolution that will uphold this international norm by imposing legally binding obligations on Syria—on the government—to eliminate this chemical weapons program.

This resolution will require the destruction of a category of weapons that the Syrian government has used ruthlessly and repeatedly against its own people. And this resolution will make clear that there are going to be consequences for noncompliance.

This is very significant. This is the first time since the Syria conflict began 2½ years ago that the Security Council has imposed binding obligations on Syria—binding obligations of any kind. The first time. The resolution also establishes what President Obama has been emphasizing for many months: that the use of chemical weapons anywhere constitutes a threat to international peace and security. By establishing this, the Security Council is establishing a new international norm.

As you know, we went into these negotiations with a fundamental red line, which is that we would get in this resolution a reference to Chapter VII in the event of noncompliance, that we would get the Council committing to impose measures under Chapter VII if the Syrians did not comply with their binding, legal obligations.

If implemented fully, this resolution will eliminate one of the largest previously undeclared chemical weapons programs in the world, and this is a chemical weapons program—I don't have to tell you—that has sat precariously in one of the most volatile countries and in one of the most horrific civil wars the world has seen in a very long time.

In the span of a few weeks, the curtain that hid this secret chemical weapons program has been lifted and the world is on the verge of requiring that these terrible weapons be destroyed.

This resolution breaks new ground in another critical respect. For the first time, the Security Council is on the verge of coming together to endorse the Geneva Communiqué, calling for the establishment of a

transitional governing body with full executive powers. If adopted, we will have achieved what we were unable to do before—unable to do for the last 2½ years—which is to fully endorse the Communiqué and call for the convening, as soon as possible, of an international conference on its implementation.

As Ambassador Churkin, with whom we've worked very productively, has just stated, we are hoping for a vote tomorrow in the OPCW Executive Council on the OPCW Executive Council decision. And then in the wake of that vote—and we hope in the immediate wake of that vote—we would have Security Council adoption of this text, which we are optimistic is going to be received very warmly. We're optimistic for an overwhelming vote.

Before closing, just let me—bear in mind, or note that we should bear in mind, even as we express appreciation for the cooperation that brought us to this moment but let us bear in mind the sobering catalyst for all of this: the use on August 21st of chemical weapons against people who were just sleeping in their beds, against children who will never get to share their dreams.

The precipitant for this effort was as ghastly as anything we have ever seen. And I think the Council members are well aware of that. A number of the Council members referred to the events of August 21 and the importance of keeping the victims of that attack and other chemical weapons attacks in their minds as we seek to move forward.

The second sobering note, of course, goes beyond chemical weapons, which is that every day Syrians are dying by artillery, by air power, by Scuds. This monstrous conflict has to come to an end. And we are hopeful that the spirit of cooperation that we carried from Secretary Kerry and Foreign Minister Lavrov's negotiations in Geneva back to New York, that that spirit of cooperation will carry over now on humanitarian issues and, fundamentally, on the political solution we all know is needed to this horrific conflict.

TRIBUTE TO DARREL THOMPSON

Mr. REID. Madam President, behind each Senator is a team of hard-working and dedicated staffers who ensure our constituents have the best possible representation in Congress.

For almost 9 years, Darrel Thompson, my deputy chief of staff for intergovernmental and external affairs, has been a lynchpin of my Washington staff.

Darrel grew up in Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, but he fights for my constituents as if he is a native Nevadan.

Darrel works with Federal and State officials and business leaders to foster economic opportunities in Nevada.

And Nevada employers and workers alike have been fortunate to have Darrel watching out for their interests.

Sadly for us, today is Darrel's last day with my office.

Darrel has lived on Capitol Hill for two decades, and he is leaving to realize his dream of running for the District of Columbia City Council seat for Ward 6.

I know Darrel's talent will shine in this new endeavor, as it has in my office.

Darrel has been a trusted advisor on international labor and employment

issues, labor negotiations, and job growth.

He has also been an advocate for social justice, and for both the faith and African-American communities.

And he has always been a strong voice for the District of Columbia in the U.S. Senate.

Darrel's prior experience has been also an asset to our team.

Before he joined my staff, he was chief of staff for the Barack Obama for Senate campaign and finance chief of staff for Congressman Gephardt's 2004 presidential campaign.

He also received his master's in public administration from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

I am so sorry to see Darrel go, but I know my loss will be the District's gain.

I congratulate him on his 9 years of dedicated service to the U.S. Senate.

I wish Darrel success in his race for city council as well as a lifetime of happiness.

STOPPING THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, the recent tragic shooting at the Navy Yard has by now moved off the front pages, but for the victims and their loved ones and for the Washington, DC community, the effects of that horrific day will linger much longer. We may never fully understand what demons compelled the perpetrator to commit this heinous act, but at least one thing is clear: We should not consider this incident in a vacuum, not after 6 dead in Tuscon, not after 12 dead in Aurora, not after 6 dead in Oak Creek and 2 dead in Clackamas and 27 dead in Newtown, 20 of them children, not while mass shootings are occurring all around our Nation, every day, in places like Albuquerque, Minneapolis, Newton Falls, Seattle, Chicago, and many more. In the words of MedStar Washington Hospital Center chief medical officer Dr. Janis Orlowski, "There's something wrong here when we have these multiple shootings, these multiple injuries, there's something wrong."

Dr. Orlowski is right. Our Nation is torn by gun violence. Facts are facts: The American Journal of Medicine recently released clinical research showing that the United States has a rate of 10.2 gun-related deaths per 100,000 people. This rate is far higher than almost all of the 27 other countries the study examined—higher than the rates of the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Japan, Spain, Ireland, Italy, Turkey, Germany, and Canada combined. The Washington Post has put similar findings in sobering perspective by noting that an American is "20 times as likely to be killed by a gun than is someone from another developed country."

Congress can take important steps to stop this violence. There is legislation in the Senate right now that, if enacted, would take important steps toward reducing gun violence in this

country. Among other things, these bills would close the 'gun show loophole' that allows 40 percent of gun purchases in this Nation to go forward without any sort of background check on the buyer. This loophole allows criminals, the mentally ill, domestic abusers, and terrorists to obtain deadly weapons to turn on our communities.

The American people agree that taking this step would just be common sense. Study after study has shown that around 90 percent of Americans support comprehensive background checks for all gun sales. Another study conducted by the UC Davis Violence Prevention Research Program found that 55.4 percent of gun dealers and pawnbrokers in the United States support comprehensive background checks.

Public safety is not a partisan issue. Dr. Orlowski said it well: "Mass murders people—walking through schools, people walking through movie theaters, people walking through work places—unfortunately is common, or more common than what it should be . . . we've got to work together to stop this." The American people overwhelmingly support commonsense gun safety measures. Our law enforcement communities, our medical communities, even our licensed gun sellers overwhelmingly support commonsense gun safety measures. We should listen to them, and act.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

WHITEMAN LUMBER COMPANY

• Mr. RISCH. Madam President, sustaining the longevity of American small businesses should be a primary focus of today's lawmakers. When we find a company that has managed to endure through difficult economic times, we should honor their commitments to the American dream and learn from them so that others can follow in their footsteps. The Whiteman Lumber Company, from the Silver Valley in northern Idaho, is a prime example of this. It is a small family business that has survived recessions and fires but continues to thrive and enhance the lumber industry.

In 1928, Harry H. Whiteman started what has now become the oldest continuously operating sawmill in all of Idaho. When the neighboring Sunshine Mining Company needed a constant supply of mining timbers to operate, Mr. Whiteman saw an opportunity and financed his lumber company by becoming the mine's primary and reliable lumber source. Whiteman Lumber then expanded distribution to other surrounding mines until arduous environmental regulations caused the decline of the mineral markets in the area.

Brad and Mary Corkill bought Whiteman Lumber in 1988 and maintained the strong relationship with the Sunshine Mining Company until its closure in 2001. Since then, Mr. Corkill has

grown the business by focusing on both the national and local markets, selling materials to individuals, timber framers, contractors, and wholesalers, in addition to the remaining regional silver mines. Whiteman Lumber also supports the Silver Valley community by sustaining a supply of almost exclusively large logs from local mills, which are no longer capable of milling bigger trees. Moreover, they add a distinctive rustic look to their product by using circular saw technology and offer customized kiln drying to achieve specific levels of lumber moisture content for their clients.

Whiteman Lumber Company continues to be an essential part of the Silver Valley thanks to fortitude and their longstanding relationships with buyers. In 2009, the middle of the recession, a fire burned down the lumber mill, but Mr. Corkill quickly rebuilt into a more efficient layout and had their employees back to work within the year, several of whom are still related to Harry Whiteman.

The family-run business of the Whiteman Lumber Company is perfect representation of resiliency. They survived a devastating fire and the collapse of the mining industry by giving their clients desirable products while also giving back to their community. Mr. Corkill's business model is a vital tool that can be used by small businesses across the country striving to support the local and national economy while maintaining their own permanency.●

RECOGNIZING THE STODDARD FAMILY

• Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the Stoddard family of Sandown, NH. In May of 2010, Cole Stoddard was diagnosed with neuroblastoma, a form of childhood cancer. Cole was 4 years old at the time of his diagnosis, and he passed away nearly a year and a half later on January 20, 2012, at the age of 5. Since Cole's passing, his parents, Tony and Michelle Stoddard, and their children, Tara and Troy, have made it their mission to raise awareness about childhood cancer and encourage people throughout the country to learn more about the disease that annually takes the lives of nearly 1,500 children in the United States.

The Stoddard family has worked tirelessly over the past year in their efforts to designate the month of September 2013 as "Childhood Cancer Awareness Month," and 41 States have already signed on and made this designation. Tony has also encouraged people to wear the color gold in September to further raise awareness about this devastating disease. Tony's advocacy has brought the Stoddard family to the famed Fenway Park in Boston, MA to raise awareness about childhood cancer, and Boston's Prudential Center was lit gold to acknowledge the cause. Landmarks in places as far

as Australia, Ireland, and Switzerland have been colored gold to recognize Childhood Cancer Awareness Month.

In the United States, approximately 11,500 children under the age of 15 will be or have been diagnosed with childhood cancer this year. It is the leading cause of death by disease in children in our country, and its causes are largely unknown. While medical research has led to better treatment and a significant increase in 5-year survival rates over the last 30 years, more needs to be done.

I would like to thank and recognize the Stoddard family for their tireless work toward raising awareness about childhood cancer. Their noble efforts have already made a positive impact on thousands of young lives, and I know that I join all of New Hampshire this September in wishing them the best of luck as they continue their mission in Cole's honor and memory.●

CONNECTICUT LAKES HEADWATER PROJECT

• Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the 10th anniversary of the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Project.

In 2001, as Governor of New Hampshire, I partnered with my friend and our former colleague, Senator Judd Gregg, to form the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Partnership Task Force. This broad coalition joined forces to protect the largest remaining undeveloped block of New Hampshire land from future commercial and industrial development. We developed a bipartisan plan for conserving the land for traditional recreational use and forestry.

Ten years ago marked the completion of the final phase of the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Project, which in total protects 171,000 acres in Pittsburg, Clarksville, and Stewartstown. This wonderful project enjoyed the support of the thousands of community members who live and work in New Hampshire's North Country. This land includes pristine undeveloped lakes, crystal-clear streams, and healthy forests of balsam fir, maples, and birches.

These treasured lands are integral to our State's economy and environmental heritage. It is a working forest where value for man is managed in concert with value for wildlife. They are home to some of New Hampshire's most scenic areas and notable, rare species, such as the loon and bald eagle. Each year, tourists and Granite Staters alike travel to the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters to enjoy the spectacular scenery and diverse recreational activities the area has to offer, including hunting, fishing, canoeing, and snowmobiling. Between its tourism and timber-related jobs, this land contributes vitality to the North Country's economy.

Today, the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters are a cherished part of New

Hampshire's identity, and the people of New Hampshire are committed to preserving this inspiring landscape for future generations.●

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the President of the United States submitting a nomination which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

(The message received today is printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2013, the Secretary of the Senate, on September 29, 2013, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the House agreed to the amendment of the Senate to the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 59) making continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes, with amendments, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:28 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2251. An act to designate the United States courthouse and Federal building located at 118 South Mill Street, in Fergus Falls, Minnesota, as the "Edward J. Devitt United States Courthouse and Federal Building".

H.R. 2848. An act to authorize appropriations for the Department of State for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3204. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to human drug compounding and drug supply chain security, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3210. An act making continuing appropriations for military pay in the event of a Government shutdown.

The message also announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276h, and the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Speaker appoints the following Members of the House of Representatives to the Mexico-United States Interparliamentary Group: Mr. PASTOR of Arizona, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. POLIS of Colorado, and Mr. GALLEGOS of Texas.

At 3:45 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by

Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2642) to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes, with an amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 6:08 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 3210. An act making continuing appropriations for military pay in the event of a Government shutdown.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the Acting President pro tempore (Mr. DURBIN).

At 9:04 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 59) making continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes, with an amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 2251. An act to designate the United States courthouse and Federal building located at 118 South Mill Street, in Fergus Falls, Minnesota, as the "Edward J. Devitt United States Courthouse and Federal Building"; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 2848. An act to authorize appropriations for the Department of State for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-3173. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Methyl Parathion; Removal of Expired Tolerances" (FRL No. 9401-3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-3174. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "FD and C Blue No. 1; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9396-1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-3175. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule en-

titled "FD and C Yellow No. 5; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9400-6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-3176. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Importation of Litchi Fruit from Australia" ((RIN0579-AD56) (Docket No. APHIS-2009-0084)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-3177. A communication from the Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12978 of October 21, 1995, with respect to significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3178. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Suspension of Community Eligibility" ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA-2013-0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3179. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Suspension of Community Eligibility" ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA-2013-0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 27, 2013; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3180. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Grain-Shipments and Grain-Shipments Assist Vessels" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0010)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3181. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone, Delaware River; Wilmington, DE" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0827)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3182. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; America's Cup Aerobic Box, San Francisco Bay, San Francisco, CA" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0741)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3183. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; 2013 Annual Islamorada Swim for Alligator Lighthouse, Atlantic Ocean, Islamorada, FL" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0663)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3184. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Pro Hydro-X Tour, Atlantic Ocean, Islamorada, FL" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0762)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3185. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Catawba Island Club Wedding Event, Catawba Island Club, Catawba Island, OH" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0840)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3186. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulated Navigation Area—Tappan Zee Bridge Construction Project, Hudson River; South Nyack and Tarrytown, NY" ((RIN1625-AA11) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0705)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3187. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Special Local Regulation; Frogtown Race Regatta; Maumee River, Toledo, OH" ((RIN1625-AA08) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0839)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3188. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Ohio; Redesignation of the Dayton-Springfield Area to Attainment of the 1997 Annual Standard for Fine Particulate Matter" (FRL No. 9901-09 Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3189. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes; State of California; PM10; Redesignation of Sacramento to Attainment; Approval of PM10 Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan for Sacramento" (FRL No. 9901-29-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3190. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Utah; Maintenance Plan for the 1997 8-Hour Ozone Standard for Salt Lake County and Davis County" (FRL No. 9786-3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3191. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Outer Continental Shelf Air Regula-

tions Consistency Update for California" (FRL No. 9831-2) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3192. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Revisions to New Source Review (NSR) State Implementation Plan (SIP); Emergency Orders" (FRL No. 9901-30 Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3193. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revision of Air Quality Implementation Plan; California; Placer County Air Pollution Control District and Feather River Air Quality Management District; Stationary Source Permits" (FRL No. 9833-1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3194. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; States of Michigan and Minnesota; Regional Haze" (FRL No. 9901-31-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3195. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Delaware; Update to Materials Incorporated by Reference" (FRL No. 9900-05-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3196. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Connecticut; Redesignation of Connecticut Portion of the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut Non-attainment Area to Attainment of the 1997 Annual and 2006 24-hour Standards for Fine Particulate Matter" (FRL No. 9901-11-Region 1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3197. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; Adoption of Control Techniques Guidelines for Miscellaneous Metal and Plastic Parts which Includes Pleasure Craft Coating Operations" (FRL No. 9901-20-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3198. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District, Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District, South Coast Air Quality Management Dis-

trict and Ventura County Air Pollution Control District" (FRL No. 9832-9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3199. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, South Coast Air Quality Management District" (FRL No. 9900-74-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3200. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revision to the California State Implementation Plan, Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District" (FRL No. 9900-96-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3201. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of State Implementation Plan Revisions; Infrastructure Requirements for the 1997 and 2006 PM 2.5 National Ambient Air Quality Standards; Prevention of Significant Deterioration Requirements for PM 2.5 Increments and Major and Minor Source Baseline Dates; Colorado" (FRL No. 9901-04-Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3202. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Kentucky; Stage II Requirements for Enterprise Holdings, Inc. at Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport in Boone County" (FRL No. 9901-23-Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3203. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Virginia; Section 110(a) (2) Infrastructure Requirements for the 2008 Lead National Ambient Air Quality Standards" (FRL No. 9901-22-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3204. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Louisiana: Final Authorization of State-initiated Changes and Incorporation by Reference of Approved State Hazardous Waste Management Program" (FRL No. 9819-8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3205. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; Withdrawal of Direct Final Rule for the Update of the Motor Vehicle Emissions

Budgets for the Lancaster 1997 8-Hour Ozone Maintenance Area" (FRL No. 9901-21-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3206. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Quality: Revision to Definition to Volatile Organic Compounds—Exclusion of 2,3,3,3-tetrafluoropropene" (FRL No. 9900-53-OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3207. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; West Virginia; West Virginia's Redesignation Request for the Wheeling, WV-OH 1997 Annual Fine Particulate Matter Nonattainment Area to Attainment and Approval of the Associated Maintenance Plan" (FRL No. 9901-41-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3208. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Washington: Thurston County Second 10-Year PM 10 Limited Maintenance Plan" (FRL No. 9901-34-Region 10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 23, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3209. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, the Secretary of the Army's report relative to the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (MRGO) Ecosystem Restoration, Louisiana; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3210. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Application of Windsor Decision and Rev. Rul. 2013-17 to Employment Taxes and Special Administrative Procedures for Employers to Make Adjustments or Claims for Refund or Credit" (Notice 2013-61) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3211. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Clarification of Notice 2013-29" (Notice 2013-60) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3212. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Applicable Federal Rates—October 2013" (Rev. Rul. 2013-21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3213. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13-098); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3214. A communication from the Program Manager, Health Resources and Serv-

ices Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA) Medical Malpractice Program Regulations: Clarification of FTCA Coverage for Services Provided to Non-Health Center Patients" (RIN0906-AA77) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 24, 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3215. A communication from the Director of the Division of Coal Mine Workers' Compensation, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulations Implementing the Byrd Amendments to the Black Lung Benefits Act: Determining Coal Miners' and Survivors' Entitlement to Benefits" (RIN1240-AA04) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3216. A communication from the Board Members, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's budget submission for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3217. A communication from the Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the cost of response and recovery efforts for FEMA-3363-EM in the State of Texas having exceeded the \$5,000,000 limit for a single emergency declaration; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3218. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-148, "Private Contractor and Subcontractor Prompt Payment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3219. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-149, "Closing of a Public Alley in Square 77, S.O. 12-6036, Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3220. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-152, "Marriage Officiant Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3221. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-153, "JaParker Deoni Jones Birth Certificate Equality Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3222. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-154, "Criminal Record Sealing Temporary Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3223. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-155, "Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Board of Directors Temporary Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3224. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-156, "Saving D.C. Homes from Foreclosure Clarification and Title Insur-

ance Clarification and Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3225. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Glyphosate; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9396-6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-3226. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Methoxyfenozide; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9399-6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-3227. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Sedaxane; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9397-8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-3228. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Kathleen M. Gainey, United States Army, and her advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-3229. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Kurt A. Cichowski, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-3230. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of General Edward A. Rice, Jr., United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-3231. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of General Claude R. Kehler, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-3232. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Vice Richard W. Hunt, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-3233. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Office of Housing, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Housing Administration (FHA) Approval of Lending Institutions and Mortgagees: Streamlined Reporting Requirements for Small Supervised Lenders and Mortgagees" (RIN2502-AJ00) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 27, 2013; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3234. A communication from the Chairman and President of the Export-Import Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to transactions involving U.S. exports to Hong Kong; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3235. A communication from the Acting Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the continuation of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13413 with respect to blocking the property of persons contributing to the conflict taking place in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3236. A communication from the Special Inspector General for the Troubled Asset Relief Program, transmitting, the July 2013 Quarterly Report to Congress of the Special Inspector General for the Troubled Asset Relief Programs; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3237. A communication from the Branch Chief, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Interim Rule to List the Southern White Rhino as Threatened" (RIN1018-AY76) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 26, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3238. A communication from the Branch Chief, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Interim Rule to List the Southern White Rhino as Threatened" (RIN1018-AY15) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 26, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3239. A communication from the Chief of the Endangered Species Listing Branch, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Status for the Neosho Mucket and Threatened Status for the Rabbitsfoot" (RIN1018-AX73) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 26, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3240. A communication from the Chief of the Endangered Species Listing Branch, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Determination of Endangered Status for the Taylor's Checkerspot Butterfly and Threatened Status for the Streaked Horned Lark" (RIN1018-AY18) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 26, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3241. A communication from the Chief of the Endangered Species Listing Branch, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for Taylor's Checkerspot Butterfly and Streaked Horned Lark" (RIN1018-AZ36) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 26, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3242. A communication from the Chief of the Endangered Species Listing Branch, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Species Status for *Echinomastus erectocentrus* var. *acunensis* (*Acuna Cactus*) and *Pediocactus peeblesianus* var. *fickeiseniae* (*Fickeisen Plains Cactus*) Throughout Their Ranges" (RIN1018-AY51) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 26, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3243. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division,

Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulation of Fuels and Fuel Additives: Modifications to Renewable Fuel Standard Program" (FRL No. 9900-89-OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3244. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia; Removal of Obsolete Regulations and Updates to Citations to State Regulations Due to Recodification; Correction" (FRL No. 9901-40-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3245. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; District of Columbia; Infrastructure Requirements for the 2008 Lead National Ambient Air Quality Standards and State Board Requirements" (FRL No. 9901-35-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3246. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Indiana" (FRL No. 9901-53-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3247. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Ohio; Dayton-Springfield, Steubenville-Weirton, Toledo, and Parkersburg-Marietta; 1997 8-Hour Ozone Maintenance Plan Revision to Approved Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets" (FRL No. 9901-61-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3248. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Ohio; Redesignation of the Canton-Massillon Area to Attainment of the 1997 Annual Standard and the 2006 24-Hour Standard for Fine Particulate Matter" (FRL No. 9901-63-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3249. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Illinois; Redesignation of the Chicago Area to Attainment of the 1997 Annual Fine Particulate Matter Standard" (FRL No. 9901-44-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3250. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant

to law, the report of a rule entitled "Review of Experiments for Research Reactors" (Regulatory Guide 2.4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3251. A communication from the Acting Commissioner of the Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to continuing disability reviews (CDR) completed in fiscal year 2011; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3252. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a Determination and Certification under Section 40A of the Arms Export Control Act relative to Syria (OSS 2013-1594); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3253. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13-078); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3254. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13-130); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3255. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13-112); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3256. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to sections 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13-100); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3257. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 40(g) (2) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13-147); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3258. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 40(g) (2) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13-142); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3259. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13-101); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3260. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Turtles Intrastate and Interstate Requirements" (Docket No. FDA-2013-N-0639) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 2, 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3261. A communication from the Director of the Regulations, Legislation, and Interpretation Division, Wage and Hour Division, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Application of the Fair Labor Standards Act to Domestic Service" (RIN1235-AA05) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3262. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Fiscal Year 2014-2018 Strategic Plan for

the Department of Health and Human Services; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3263. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Certification Process for State Capital Counsel System" (RIN1121-AA77) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 30, 2013; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-3264. A communication from the Director of the Regulation Policy and Management Office of the General Counsel, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned and Veteran-Owned Small Business Status Protest" (RIN2900-AM92) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 27, 2013; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-3265. A communication from the Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pacific Cod in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area" (RIN0648-XC817) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 27, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3266. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Commercial Shark Fisheries" (RIN0648-XC836) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 27, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3267. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher/Processors Using Trawl Gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska" (RIN0648-XC850) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 27, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3268. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pacific Cod in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska Management Area" (RIN0648-XC856) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 27, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3269. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Queen Conch Fishery of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands; Regulatory Amendment 2" (RIN0648-BD15) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 27, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3270. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries Off West Coast States; Highly Migratory Fisheries; California Drift Gillnet Fishery; Sperm Whale Interaction Restriction" (RIN0648-BD57) received in the Office of the

President of the Senate on September 27, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3271. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Red Snapper Management Measures" (RIN0648-BD39) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 27, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3272. A communication from the Acting Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "2012 Report to Congress on the Disclosure of Financial Interest and Recusal Requirements for Regional Fishery Management Councils and Scientific and Statistical Committees"; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. MENENDEZ, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and an amendment to the title and with an amended preamble:

S. Res. 213. A resolution expressing support for the free and peaceful exercise of representative democracy in Venezuela and condemning violence and intimidation against the country's political opposition.

By Mr. MENENDEZ, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment and with a preamble:

S. Res. 227. A resolution to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the heroic rescue of Danish Jews during the Second World War by the Danish people.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. MENENDEZ for the Committee on Foreign Relations.

*Caroline Kennedy, of New York, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Japan.

Nominee: Caroline B. Kennedy.

Post: Japan.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

Self: \$2,500, 03/26/2009, Jennifer Brunner Committee; \$1,000.00, 09/30/2009, Friends Of Patrick J. Kennedy Inc.; \$1,000.00, 09/30/2009, Bill White For Texas; \$250.00, 02/10/2012, Obama for America; \$250.00, 02/10/2012, Obama for America; \$250.00, 02/10/2012, Obama for America; \$500.00, 02/10/2012, Obama for America; \$1,000.00, 02/10/2012, Obama for America; \$1,000.00, 03/28/2012, John Lewis For Congress; \$2,250.00, 05/5/2012, Obama for America; \$1,500.00, 06/26/2012, John Lewis For Congress; \$2,500.00, 06/26/2012, John Lewis For Congress; \$1,000.00, 06/26/2012, Elizabeth For Ma Inc.; \$250.00, 06/30/2012, Elizabeth For Ma Inc.

Joint Fundraising Contributions: \$500.00, 06/30/2012, Obama Victory Fund 2012; \$500.00,

09/13/2012, Obama Victory Fund 2012; \$500.00, 09/13/2012, Obama Victory Fund 2012.

Recipient of Joint Fundraising Contributions: \$500.00, 06/25/2012, DNC Services Corporation/Democratic National Committee; \$500.00, 09/14/2012, DNC Services Corporation/Democratic National Committee; \$500.00, 09/14/2012, DNC Services Corporation/Democratic National Committee; \$2,000.00 07/8/2004, DNC Services Corporation/Democratic National Committee.

2. Spouse: Edwin A. Schlossberg: \$1000.00, 07/12/2009, Friends of Chris Dodd; \$500.00, 09/13/2010, Tommy Sowers For Congress; \$1,000.00, 02/28/2012, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; \$1,000.00, 06/26/2012, John Lewis For Congress; \$2,000.00 09/28/2012, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee; \$1,000.00, 02/22/2013, Elizabeth Colbert Busch For Congress

Joint Fundraising Contributions: \$5,000.00, 09/12/2012, Obama Victory Fund 2012; \$5,000.00, 09/25/2012, Obama Victory Fund 2012.

Recipient of Joint Fundraising Contributions: \$416.00, 09/12/2012, Democratic Executive Committee of Florida; \$333.00, 09/12/2012; Democratic Party of Wisconsin; \$277.00, 09/12/2012, Iowa Democratic Party; \$277.00, 09/12/2012, Nevada State Democratic Party; \$2,500.00, 09/12/2012, Obama for America; \$666.00, 09/12/2012, Ohio Democratic Party; \$388.00, 09/25/2012, Colorado Democratic Party; \$833.00, 09/25/2012, Democratic Executive Committee of Florida; \$666.00, 09/25/2012, Democratic Party of Wisconsin; \$555.00, 09/25/2012, Iowa Democratic Party; \$555.00, 09/25/2012, Nevada State Democratic Party; \$133.00, 09/25/2012, Ohio Democratic Party; \$250.00, 10/17/2012, Democratic Party of Virginia; \$500.00, 10/26/2012, Democratic Party of Virginia; \$555.00, 11/26/2012, Nevada State Democratic Party.

3. Children and Spouses: Rose Kennedy Schlossberg (single): \$250.00, 12/06/2009, Citizens for Alan Khazei; \$200.00, 02/12/2008, Obama for America; \$250.00, 09/23/2011, Obama for America. Tatiana Celia Kennedy Scholssberg (single): \$150.00, 09/27/2008, Obama for America. John Bouvier Kennedy Schlossberg (single): None.

4. Parents; John Fitzgerald Kennedy—deceased; Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis—deceased.

5. Grandparents: Joseph P. Kennedy, Sr.—deceased; Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy—deceased; John Vernou Bouvier, III—deceased; Janet Norton Lee—deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: Brother: John F. Kennedy, Jr.—deceased; Brother's Spouse: Carolyn Bessette—deceased.

7. Sisters and Spouses—None.

By Mr. CARPER for the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

*Carol Waller Pope, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of five years expiring July 1, 2014.

*Ernest W. Dubester, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of five years expiring July 29, 2017.

*Patrick Pizzella, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of five years expiring July 1, 2015.

*Stevan Eaton Bunnell, of the District of Columbia, to be General Counsel, Department of Homeland Security.

*Suzanne Eleanor Spaulding, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary, Department of Homeland Security.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND
JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself and Mr. BENNET):

S. 1560. A bill to allow certain emergency relief amounts to be made available to the Federal Highway Administration to use for disasters occurring in calendar year 2013; considered and passed.

By Mr. HARKIN (for himself and Mr. ALEXANDER):

S. 1561. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to improve provisions relating to the sanctuary system for surplus chimpanzees; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, and Mr. HARKIN):

S. 1562. A bill to reauthorize the Older Americans Act of 1965, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 1563. A bill to provide for the expansion of the biofuels market; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 1564. A bill making continuing appropriations for veterans benefits and services in the event of a Government shutdown; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Mr. CASEY:

S. 1565. A bill to require the Secretary of Labor to maintain a publicly available list of all employers that relocate a call center overseas, to make such companies ineligible for Federal grants or guaranteed loans, and to require disclosure of the physical location of business agents engaging in customer service communications, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. CARDIN):

S. 1566. A bill to extend the period during which Iraqis who were employed by the United States Government in Iraq may be granted special immigrant status and to temporarily increase the fee or surcharge for processing machine-readable nonimmigrant visas; considered and passed.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 55

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 55, a bill to prohibit Members of Congress and the President from receiving pay during Government shutdowns.

S. 183

At the request of Mr. COBURN, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 183, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for fairness in hospital payments under the Medicare program.

S. 203

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 203, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition and celebration of the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

S. 429

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 429, a bill to enable concrete masonry products manufacturers to establish, finance, and carry out a coordinated program of research, education, and promotion to improve, maintain, and develop markets for concrete masonry products.

S. 479

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 479, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the employment tax treatment and reporting of wages paid by professional employer organizations, and for other purposes.

S. 557

At the request of Mrs. HAGAN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 557, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to medication therapy management under part D of the Medicare program.

S. 569

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 569, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to count a period of receipt of outpatient observation services in a hospital toward satisfying the 3-day inpatient hospital requirement for coverage of skilled nursing facility services under Medicare.

S. 644

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 644, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to prevent the abuse of dextromethorphan, and for other purposes.

S. 666

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 666, a bill to prohibit attendance of an animal fighting venture, and for other purposes.

S. 893

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 893, a bill to provide for an increase, effective December 1, 2013, in the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 987

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, her name was withdrawn as a cosponsor of S. 987, a bill to maintain the free flow of information to the public by providing conditions for the federally compelled disclosure of information by certain persons connected with the news media.

S. 1064

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1064, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for treatment of clinical psychologists as physicians for purposes of furnishing clinical psychologist services under the Medicare program.

S. 1158

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1158, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins commemorating the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the National Park Service, and for other purposes.

S. 1242

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1242, a bill to amend the Fair Housing Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1306

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1306, a bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 in order to improve environmental literacy to better prepare students for postsecondary education and careers, and for other purposes.

S. 1320

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1320, a bill to establish a tiered hiring preference for members of the reserve components of the armed forces.

S. 1349

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1349, a bill to enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities, boost small businesses, increase individual savings, and for other purposes.

S. 1417

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1417, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize programs under part A of title XI of such Act.

S. 1419

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr.

KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1419, a bill to promote research, development, and demonstration of marine and hydrokinetic renewable energy technologies, and for other purposes.

S. 1442

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1442, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the minimum low-income housing tax credit rate for unsubsidized buildings and to provide a minimum 4 percent credit rate for existing buildings.

S. 1489

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1489, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require the Secretary of the Treasury to notify the taxpayer each time the taxpayer's information is accessed by the Internal Revenue Service.

S. 1490

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1490, a bill to delay the application of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 1503

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1503, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the preference given, in awarding certain asthma-related grants, to certain States (those allowing trained school personnel to administer epinephrine and meeting other related requirements).

S. 1541

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1541, a bill to appropriate such funds as may be necessary to ensure that members of the Armed Forces, including reserve components thereof, and supporting civilian and contractor personnel continue to receive pay and allowances for active service performed when a Governmentwide shutdown occurs, and for other purposes.

S. 1551

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1551, a bill to reform

the authorities of the Federal Government to require the production of certain business records, conduct electronic surveillance, use pen registers and trap and trace devices, and use other forms of information gathering for foreign intelligence, counterterrorism, and criminal purposes, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 261

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 261, a resolution designating the week beginning September 23, 2013, as "National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week."

AMENDMENT NO. 1966

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1966 intended to be proposed to H.J. Res. 59, a joint resolution making continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes.

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,
AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet in executive session on Wednesday, October 2, 2013, at 10 a.m. in room 430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to mark up S. _____, Children's Hospital GME Support Reauthorization act of 2013; S. _____, CHIMP Act Amendments of 2013; H.R. 2094, School Access to Emergency Epinephrine Act; S. _____, Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2013; the nominations of Michael Keith Yudin, to serve as Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education; James Cole Jr., to serve as General Counsel, Department of Education; and Chai Feldblum, to serve as Commissioner, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; as well as any additional nominations cleared for action.

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact the Committee at (202) 224-5375.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC
WORKS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Com-

mittee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 30, 2013.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 30, 2013 at 6:45 p.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 30, 2013.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2013, AT 9:30 A.M.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:18 a.m., adjourned until Tuesday, October 1, 2013, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION

DANA J. HYDE, OF MARYLAND, TO BE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION, VICE DANIEL W. YOHANNES.

INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

MARK E. LOPES, OF ARIZONA, TO BE UNITED STATES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK FOR A TERM OF THREE YEARS, VICE GUSTAVO ARNAVAT, RESIGNED.

EUROPEAN BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND
DEVELOPMENT

CATHERINE ANN NOVELLI, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNITED STATES ALTERNATE GOVERNOR OF THE EUROPEAN BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT, VICE ROBERT D. HORMATS, RESIGNED.

INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION
AND DEVELOPMENT

CATHERINE ANN NOVELLI, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNITED STATES ALTERNATE GOVERNOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS; UNITED STATES ALTERNATE GOVERNOR OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS, VICE ROBERT D. HORMATS, RESIGNED.

SOCIAL SECURITY ADVISORY BOARD

LANHEE J. CHEN, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADVISORY BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 30, 2018, VICE MARK J. WARSHAWSKY, TERM EXPIRED.

ALAN L. COHEN, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE MEMBER OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADVISORY BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 30, 2016, VICE DANA K. BILYEU, TERM EXPIRED.