

local health department or community clinic and get these tests. More than 5 million women use these centers for title X coverage every year—5 million—and one of them could be my granddaughter or my daughter.

Mr. President, some watching us today—and we know the whole world is watching us today—may be asking why I am talking about women's health when the question before us is the budget of the biggest economy on the planet Earth. Some may ask why we are talking about the smallest corner of planet Earth. With a government shutdown looming not weeks away or days away but hours away, why are we talking about whether women can get something as simple and noncontroversial as a cancer screening? The answer is that Republicans want to shut down our Nation's government because they want to make it harder for women to get the health services they need.

By the way, title X does not include abortion. It is illegal to use Federal funds for abortion services. So anyone who says this debate is over abortion isn't being truthful. It is about simple and important health services. Republicans want to shut down the government because they think there is nothing more important than keeping women from getting cancer screenings. This is indefensible, and everyone should be outraged—men and women should be outraged. The Republican House leadership has only a few hours left to look in the mirror, snap out of it, and realize how positively shameful that would be.

For months, this conversation has been about billions and trillions of dollars. It has been about weighty issues and difficult decisions. This debate is about saving money—or that is what we thought it was about. But no longer. We have an agreement on the cuts and savings. I was there at the White House last night. That agreement includes a historic level of cuts. We have always recognized we had to make cuts. That is why we agreed at the White House last night to make significant cuts—hard but important.

But now the tea party—among others, although they are the biggest push—is trying to move its extreme social agenda on issues that have nothing to do with funding the government. They are willing, it appears, clearly, to throw women under the bus even if it means they will shut down the government because that is where we are. That is the one issue that was remaining last night. That agenda is an extreme agenda. I don't agree with their ideas on social policy, but in our democracy, those ideas, however radical or however you may disagree with them, deserve a debate if they want one. That is fair. But that debate doesn't belong in an urgent bill to keep the government running, and it especially doesn't belong here at this late hour.

The consequences of letting our country's funding expire will be dev-

astating. There are almost 1 million Federal employees. These are people who work for the Bureau of Land Management, which doesn't have a big presence in the Presiding Officer's State but has a huge presence in Nevada. The State of Nevada is 87 percent owned by the Federal Government. There are Forest Service employees, FBI employees, Internal Revenue Service employees, and the people who work in this great government complex—almost 1 million of them—who are waiting on pins and needles.

Federal employees are like everybody else. They are working from paycheck to paycheck. They are wondering if they are going to be able to get that new car they have needed for 3 or 4 years. They are wondering, with summer coming, if they are going to be able to take that vacation they have wanted to take for a long time. Federal employees are like everybody else.

The consequences of letting our country's funding expire would be devastating to people, individuals, and it would be devastating to our troops, to our small businesses, and to Americans' everyday lives—people who just want to get a home loan or get their tax refund or, I repeat, get their paycheck. A government shutdown would damage our image and credibility around the world. But Republicans are asking me to sacrifice my wife's health, my daughter's health, and my nine granddaughters' health. They are asking me to sacrifice the health of women in Nevada and all across this country. But I am not going to be part of that. I won't do it. As a legislator, I am very frustrated. As an American, I am appalled. As a husband, a father, and a grandfather, I am personally offended.

Would the Chair announce morning business now, please.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will be in a period of morning business until 4 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, and any time spent in a quorum call will be equally divided.

The Senator from Arizona.

BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, at this very critical time in our country's history—a time when we have over a \$14 trillion debt and we are desperately trying to find ways to reduce government spending and there looms the possibility of a government shutdown—I think we

would be best served trying to provide some information to our constituents and, as politicians, resisting the temptation to throw rotten apples at each other. I also think it would be wise for the media to not hype or overhype a situation regarding a government shutdown but to try to put things into perspective. So let me try to do that for a moment this morning.

In the first place, obviously we are trying to reach agreement. I compliment the majority leader, Senator REID, who just spoke, and the Speaker of the House, JOHN BOEHNER, for their efforts to get together and bridge the differences between the two parties—the two bodies—and to reach an agreement. In the last 2 or 3 days, the President has also weighed in on the issue, and I think he too is trying very hard to help the parties reach an agreement. Notwithstanding that fact, under the law, tonight at midnight, the funding for much of the government stops, and the question is, What can be done about that?

The House of Representatives has passed a bill. They passed it yesterday. The Senate could take up that bill and pass it. It would keep the government running for another week. It would provide full funding for the military, not just for another week but for the entire rest of the year. That is a reasonable measure to keep the government running. It also, by the way, reduces \$12 billion in spending, and most of that spending, I am informed, has already been agreed to by the administration and would be included in any longer range continuing resolution.

Well, what happened? The President said he would veto that bill. That is very puzzling because if we are all seeking to fund the government, at least until there can be an agreement on a long-term resolution, one would think we would try to keep it going for another week and adopt what the House did, especially since it provides funding for the military.

The President, in his veto message, said that the bill was a distraction. I do have to take issue with that. It is not a distraction, it is what is necessary to keep the government running. Let me get back to that in a moment.

What would happen if we were able to reach agreement by tonight? If we are able to reach agreement before midnight then at least theoretically both bodies, both House and Senate, could pass a very short term, 2 or 3 days, stop-gap measure in order to have the time to complete the work on the full measure and then adopt that sometime next week and that would avert a shutdown. It is possible also, because in the Senate it would require unanimous consent; somebody might disagree with that process and would object. In that case, it would take a few days for us to do, in effect, the paperwork to get this done. That would then result in a government shutdown during that time, at least over the course of the weekend.

That should be avoided if at all possible. But while there would be some dislocations and inconveniences, I do think the media exaggerates a little bit the result of a shutdown over the weekend.

The biggest problem from my perspective is that the military doesn't get paid during that period of time. They will get paid but it is a disruptive thing when you have young military families trying to make ends meet and sometimes living from paycheck to paycheck to have that disrupted. That is why I think it makes so much sense to adopt what the House passed yesterday so we have the time, the week to complete the work on the continuing resolution that would fund the government through the end of the fiscal year, that is to say through the end of September, and then not have to worry about a government shutdown and especially funding the military.

There is a question that has been raised that is very logical. Why can't the parties get together? Why can't you split the difference? In ordinary times it might be possible to reach an agreement that way, but these are not ordinary times. We are talking about a country that is on the verge of not being able to pay its debts. The President himself has asked us to raise the debt ceiling—I believe sometime next month. In effect, we run out not only of money but of the capacity to borrow. Our credit card in effect, the government's credit card, is full up and we cannot get any more credit unless we go to the credit card company and say: Would you extend the amount of money we can borrow? In that case, it is the Congress passing a bill.

We are in a very difficult position in this country and everyone knows we are passing a lot of our debts on to future generations. We need to get a handle on that and I don't think anybody disagrees with the proposition that means we need to cut spending. That is what this exercise is all about. So it is not the usual thing of splitting the difference. We are talking about big spending cuts.

I was disappointed in the comments of the majority leader just now. He said this debate is about saving money. Indeed it is. Yet it appears the one thing—this is what he said. I do not tend to believe this is correct, but in effect what he was saying is it all boils down to a \$300-and-some million subsidy for Planned Parenthood. I do not believe that is what is keeping us from allowing the government to continue to operate. The majority leader has been in the negotiations. He is in a position to say that. If that is the case, then it seems to me we are in a very untenable position here, at least the majority leader is, because Planned Parenthood is not the only entity that can provide medical care in this country. It gets a subsidy of something like \$300 million-and-some a year. To shut down the government over that would be absolutely unthinkable.

The majority leader never said Planned Parenthood, you know, he said title X. Title X does not receive the subsidy, Planned Parenthood receives the subsidy. Everybody goes to clinics and hospitals and doctors. Some people go to Planned Parenthood. But you don't have to go to Planned Parenthood to get your cholesterol or blood pressure checked. If you want an abortion you go to Planned Parenthood and that is what Planned Parenthood does. So this is a red herring. To say that somehow the government is going to be shut down over the fact that Planned Parenthood will not get a \$300 million gift from the taxpayers of America would be absolutely irresponsible. If that is what the majority leader is saying, it is irresponsible. I cannot believe that is the fact of what is holding up this agreement from being reached.

As I said, we have the bill before us which would provide for a week-long continuation of the government with a \$12 billion reduction in spending and a funding of the military through the end of the year. It seems to me that is a very reasonable proposition. We don't have to worry about shutting the government if we adopt that.

I said I would get back to the President's message. He said it would be a distraction when he said he would veto that bill to keep the government running, and to fully fund the military. He said it would be a distraction. His exact words, "this bill is a distraction from the real work that would bring us close to a reasonable compromise." I don't see how it is a distraction if it provides another week for us to complete the work to be done. It is obvious we are going to need time to get the work done because neither the House nor the Senate can get everything that would have to be done completed by midnight tonight. The House has a requirement that they have any bill pending for 72 hours before it is adopted. This continuing resolution clearly would have to be posted for 72 hours. Do we want to shut the government down during that period of time because the President thinks the bill to do so is a distraction? I find that incomprehensible, frankly.

I also will make this final point. The discussion about reducing government spending is not just because we are having trouble borrowing from borrowers now. Over half, about 42 cents on every dollar we spend now, is borrowed from someone. About half of that is from foreign entities. It is also because, as the government spends more and more money, the private sector has less money to invest and spend. It is the private sector that creates jobs. What we need to do is spend less government money, not only to get ourselves out from under this huge debt burden but also to allow the private economy to have the resources to grow. Included in that, of course, is to hire more people.

On April 4, the Wall Street Journal had an op-ed by Dr. John Taylor, a

noted economist from Stanford, Gary Becker, a Nobel laureate in economics, George Shultz—three different Secretaries, serving in two different Cabinets—all experts in financial, fiscal matters. What they wrote in this, which they called "Time for a Budget Game-Changer" is the following two sentences:

Credible actions that reduce the rapid rate of growth of Federal spending and debt will raise economic growth and lower the unemployment rate. Higher private investment, not more government purchases, is the surest way to increase prosperity.

What we are talking about here is not drastic cuts for austerity's sake, but rather sensible reductions to create prosperity in this country. That is what we are talking about doing here. That is why I support what Speaker BOEHNER has been trying to do. I urge my colleagues, instead of, as I said, throwing rotten apples at each other here and trying to preach a doom-and-gloom game, let's focus on what this country can do in a positive and constructive way to get our economy going again and get our people back to work.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today in shock and anger that, after weeks of negotiations, after pledges from Republicans to come to the table in good faith, after repeated assurances that they want to talk about principles and budget numbers and not politics, after all the hot rhetoric we have heard about concern for our troops and our workers and that the veterans will be hurt, Republicans have decided to hold the Federal budget hostage to their extreme social agenda. It is now clear that this is not a debate in the last hours before this government shuts down about how much to cut. It is about whether women in this country will have access to basic health care services.

As a woman, as a mother, as a grandmother, I find that appalling. They can say whatever they want to on the other side, but if they want to say this is about numbers, then I challenge them to say title X is off the table. For millions of women in this country, and men, their only access to preventive health care services, pregnancy diagnosis, counseling, preventive health services, cervical and breast cancer screening, sexually transmitted disease and HIV transmission prevention and education, a broad range of access to contraceptive methods—that is what Republicans now, in the 11th hour, are holding hostage to a government shutdown. I don't think anyone in America thought this election was about that.

We heard the promises about the economy, about cutting budgets, about fiscal concerns, but we never heard from anyone that they would be willing to shut down this government and put this country at risk over an ideological debate about women's health care.

I have three words for them: Women aren't pawns. We will not be pawns in

this debate and we will not give in. The access to these critical services is so important to so many young women in this country. I told the story and I will tell it again. A few days ago I heard from a young woman in my State who, at 18-years-old, had to leave an extremely abusive family situation, out on the street on her own. She had cervical cancer that runs in her family. The only way she was able to get the medication and care she needed was through title X Federal funding through clinics in her State.

She and 5 million others in this country depend on that, and we are going to take this away at the 11th hour, in order to get an agreement? Not on my watch. Not on the watch of millions of American families in this country who know that access to women's health care is basic to them and their families and their communities. What kind of country are we, that at the 11th hour on a debate like this, the issue remaining is about women's health care? I find that stunning.

Families across my State are hurting. They have lost their jobs, they are worried about getting a pink slip, their home prices have dropped, they are worried about making their mortgage, and this debate now has come to this? An issue of access to title X funding for preventive health care for women? We need to focus on the economy. Yes, there are going to be some budget cuts in this that are going to be extremely hard for me and others who care about investing in education and jobs, but we know we have to come to an agreement. But we will not let women be used as pawns in this debate at this 11th hour. We are not going to allow this debate to end by cutting off funding for health clinics across America that are often the only place for low-income women.

In my State of Washington over 100,000 patients depend on these clinics to provide prevention. Over 3 million Americans do nationwide. We are not going to let the threat of a shutdown make us fade away. Women are going to stand tall, and men with them, across the country, to say: Not on our watch. Women are not pawns.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I am going to proceed in my leader time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has that right.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the American people have heard a lot of excuses over the past few days as to why it is that we are staring at a potential government shutdown here in Washington.

Democrats are saying the holdup is over social issues. This plays nicely into the political strategy they have decided on to distract people from their own fiscal recklessness.

Republicans say the holdup is over the need to reduce Washington spending—that Democrats, including the President, would rather see the government shut down than to allow a reduction in the size and scope of Washington that is perfectly reasonable by any objective standard.

Those are the competing messages. And generally speaking, people will probably agree with the party they tend to vote for. But whichever side you come down on, two things are not in dispute in this debate: First, that the whole reason we are in this mess is that Democrats abdicated their responsibility to keep the government funded through this year. And second, that Democrats have rejected the only plan out there that keeps the government open—the bipartisan troop funding bill—for no apparent reason.

The President says he will veto it, but does not say why. And Democrats in Congress would not vote for it, even though it funds the Defense Department and keeps the government operational and makes reasonable cuts in spending.

In other words, what Democrats are saying at this point is that they had rather see the government shut down either because they would not accept a modest amount of spending cuts that fall well within the range of what Democrats previously described as reasonable, or because they would not reinstate a longstanding policy related to one American city that Members of both parties, including Presidents of both parties, have approved repeatedly in the past.

The majority leader said yesterday that this particular provision relates to an issue that we have been unable to reach agreement on for 40 years. My response is that this is actually one of the few areas of agreement both parties have agreed about on this issue for years.

Let's be very clear about this: if the government shuts down, it is either because Democrats are pretending that a previously noncontroversial provision is suddenly out of bounds. Or they refuse to take another baby step in the direction of balancing the government checkbook, something we know the American people want. Neither reason is worth a shutdown especially when neither side actually wants one. And that is why I believe there will be an agreement here shortly. I have been in many negotiations over the years. I assure you, these are not unresolvable issues.

So my suggestion this morning is that both sides sit back and give the negotiators a few more hours to work this out.

Let Senator REID talk with his conference. Let the Speaker talk to his. And let's just hold off on the specula-

tion and the back and forth for a little while here. Both sides are working hard to reach the kind of resolution Americans want.

A resolution is within reach. The contours of a final agreement are coming into focus. There is virtually nothing in the troop funding bill Republicans in the House passed yesterday that will not be included in a final package.

Let's not disrupt and derail that agreement.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, let's make it clear where we are at this moment in time. There is an agreement. There is agreement on the budget number. It was an agreement reached between the President with Speaker BOEHNER and with Senate Majority Leader REID—an agreement on the spending cuts for the remainder of this year. It was reached last night at the White House.

Then it fell apart, not because of a change of heart when it came to the number but, rather, because of the insistence of the House Republicans that they would not let us keep this government functioning, they would not let us pass a budget resolution for the remainder of this year, unless we were prepared to virtually devastate the title X family planning program.

Let me ask you something: In the big national debate in the last election over the future of our country and what we would do with our deficit, how many times do you remember that issue coming up? Exactly. None. This issue over title X has been brought in by the House Republicans at the last moment. It has virtually no impact on government spending—virtually none.

Yet they insist on it. Why? It is because of some problems within the House Republican caucus. The Speaker of the House, JOHN BOEHNER, whom I know and respect and like, is surrounded by lean and hungry colleagues challenging his value, his resolve, and his leadership.

This House power struggle has now reached a point where we face a government shutdown and a slowdown on whether we are going to provide basic health care access for women across America. First, understand, not one penny, not a penny in title X funds can be spent on abortion, other than the strictly limited provisions of the Hyde amendment, which have been the law of the land for decades, agreed to by virtually all Republicans and Democrats.

It is about access to cancer screening, it is about pap smears, breast screening, it is about screening for infectious diseases. Here is what it means: If we cut off the funding, as the Republicans ask, for women to have access to affordable health care for their basic health, it is not, as the Senator from Arizona says, just a matter of whether they will knock on the next