

The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR,
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,
AND EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the majority leader, after consultation with the Republican leader, may turn to the consideration of S. 2776, the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, on behalf of the minority leader, we object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I thank the leader and the assistant majority leader, Senator REID, for attempting to bring forward this Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education bill. I am disappointed some in this body don't want us to move forward with this vital piece of legislation for the American people.

I invite my colleagues to take a hard look at the bill. It is a good one. It is a bipartisan bill. I invite my colleagues, especially on the Republican side, who objected to bringing this up to take a look at the cost of our inaction and what it will mean for America's school children this year.

As I have said, this is a bipartisan bill. It passed both the subcommittee and the full committee unanimously. One reason for that is the good allocation my subcommittee was provided by our chairman, Senator BYRD, and the ranking Member, Senator STEVENS. Another reason is the bipartisan partnership Senator SPECTER and I have enjoyed for many years. I thank each for their efforts.

Why can't we move forward now? Nothing is happening here. Look at the Senate. Nothing is happening. Nothing is happening, and we want to bring up our education bill to fund America's schools, and the Republicans won't let us. I ask why? Why is there an objection today to bringing up the funding bill for education?

I have heard the President pounding on the podium in cities and towns all across the country saying the U.S. Senate needs to act. I agree. It is time to act. It is time to live up to the promises the President and this Congress made on education. We are ready to act. We didn't object. The Republicans objected to bringing up our education bill.

Not incidentally, it is time to live up to the promise we made on a bipartisan basis to double the funding for the National Institutes of Health. With this bill, we would have completed that 5-year goal. Now that has been put on the back burner. With this bill, we could have completed that 5-year goal. And that is put on the back burner. It is all in jeopardy, as is the promise of the Leave No Child Behind Act.

Last year we came together on a bipartisan basis to demand more of our

public schools. We said the status quo was not good enough; we had to do better. Now, by not acting on this bill, we have passed mandates on our public schools, mandates about leaving no child behind, and now we are not coming forward with the funding to help them.

Now we are going to do a continuing resolution. That is what they tell me. What does passing a long-term continuing resolution mean? I talk about that with my constituents. I talk about a CR, a continuing resolution, and their eyes glaze over. What does that mean?

In real terms, the objection by the minority side today means \$3.2 billion less for education overall for this year, the one we are in now, and \$1.5 billion less for title I, which is most important for implementing Leave No Child Behind.

Since the objection was made on behalf of the minority leader, the Senator from Mississippi, I point out that in Mississippi that would be \$5.3 million less this year for title I if we do not get this bill through.

The ink isn't even dry on the Leave No Child Behind bill and already we are undercutting the schools. I have talked with a lot of my principals in Iowa and they are deeply concerned about what is going to happen when they have to meet their annual yearly progress standards and yet we have not given them the tools by which they can do so. It will be a cruel joke on them to have passed Leave No Child Behind and not pass the funding.

How about special education? A long-term continuing resolution, without this bill, means \$1 billion less for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Again, since this objection was made on behalf of the Senator from Mississippi, I will point out that for Mississippi it means they will get \$10.7 million less this year for special education because the minority leader objected to moving to the education appropriations bill.

It is time we pass the money for special education. Last year Senator HAGEL and I came together on a bipartisan amendment to do it, but the President and the House punted and said no. And they are doing it again.

I say to colleagues, ask your principals and your school boards about their need for special education funding and you will find out how much it is needed. Because this objection was made today, \$1 billion less will be made available to our public schools in America.

For student financial aid—for those going to college—a long-term CR means \$100 less for the maximum Pell grant, and not a single dollar more for student loans and other college aid.

In my own State of Iowa, because of the downturn in the economy, we have seen a 20-percent tuition increase at our public universities. These schools are critical to helping middle-class kids climb the ladder of opportunity.

Yet today the minority leader says no to helping these middle-class kids get a college education.

The world has changed a lot from a year ago. There is no denying that. We have different priorities, as well we should. But if we cannot ensure that every child in America has the best public education, then what kind of a nation are we fighting for?

President Kennedy once said of education:

Let us think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which, fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength for our nation.

It is the private hopes and the private dreams of the families of these kids in public schools—in elementary school and high school, and now wanting to go to college—it is their private hopes and dreams that are being stunted by the objection by the minority leader today in not going to the education funding bill.

We are here in the Senate. We are not doing a cotton-picking thing. We are just sitting around. Why? Because the minority leader will not let us do anything. They may think it is good politics. Maybe they can go out there and now argue: Well, we can't get anything done in the Senate. We can't get anything done in the Senate. Well, not because of what the Democrats are doing. We want to bring up the education funding bill. It is the minority leader who is objecting. The Republican leader is objecting.

We could bring it up. As I say one more time, this education funding bill passed the subcommittee and the full committee unanimously—unanimously. So for what possible reason would the minority leader object to bringing up the education funding bill when we are not doing anything anyway? It would seem to me we could bring it up, debate it this afternoon, and probably get it passed tomorrow, since it was supported unanimously on both sides of the aisle.

It is time for us to act to get the money out for special education, title I, for elementary and secondary education, help for our middle-class kids going to college. The minority leader today has said no. He said that politics comes first. I think our kids should come first.

Well, they have objected today, Mr. Leader. I will attempt again tomorrow to bring up the education funding bill, and every day that we are here, to bring it up to let the American people know that we, on this side, and I, as chairman of the subcommittee that funds education, want to bring it up. We want to get it through. I am just sorry that the minority leader has objected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

INACTION ON APPROPRIATIONS
BILLS

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, on one point I agree with my colleague from

Iowa: This Senate is dysfunctional. We have not done our work. It is a new year. It has already begun. We have not passed and sent to the President a single appropriations bill.

But I have to differ very strongly with his accusation, which is totally unfounded, that the objection I raised was for political purposes. The objection is raised because this body has before it an appropriations bill. We have the Interior appropriations bill before us, and it has been stalled by my colleagues on the other side. We need to vote on that bill.

One of the reasons we are in this problem is because we have not passed a budget, the first time since 1974 we have not passed a budget. I serve on the Budget Committee. I happen to believe that the budget that was reported out by the majority, on a party-line vote, was and is indefensible. The fact that the majority leader has not brought it up tends to confirm my suspicion.

But when you do not have a budget, you have a great difficulty trying to pass appropriations bills. We have passed good bills out of the Appropriations Committee. And I happen to have not only a great interest in the Labor, Health, and Human Services bill, but in the VA-HUD and independent agencies bill. We have to get those done. And we are going to get those done. It looks as if we are going to have to wait for a new Congress to do it. We are going to get those funds out there because they are vitally needed. And we have, in all of these bills, incorporated many important projects and programs that need to be funded.

But we are stuck. We have been almost, I guess it is, 5 weeks now on Interior. Why haven't we voted on and passed out an Interior bill? Why not? Because Senators from the West—and I include myself in that; it is close; we are on the west side of the Mississippi River—want to have the same protection for our forests, for the neighbors of the forests, for the people who work in the forests—the firefighters—for the people who live by the forests, for the trees themselves, the wildlife in the forests, we want to have the same protection from devastating catastrophic forest fires.

Senators CRAIG, DOMENICI, and KYL offered an amendment which I was proud to support. Very simply, that amendment gave, with many more limitations, the same kind of flexibility to the Forest Service in other States that it has in South Dakota, which is desperately needed.

The Senator from South Dakota included a provision nobody knew about in the Defense bill that said you could go in and clean out the high-density fuel and the volatile compounds lining the floors of the forests in South Dakota, but he made it just for South Dakota.

Fires are raging in the West, in California, Arizona, Colorado, Utah. They are threatened in Missouri. We said: We

want the same protection for our forests. We want to be able to use sound forest management, which means getting the dead, diseased logs out of the forest before a spark from lightning or a manmade spark or some kind of machine sets them on fire and causes a catastrophic fire that outraces the wildlife, that burns old-growth trees, that kills people. Over 20 firefighters are dead in the West from these catastrophic fires. It is burning up property.

Do you know what the result is? The environment suffers tremendously because wildlife cannot escape from these fast-moving fires. The forest floor is baked so hard that nothing will grow for decades. What we are saying is, sound forestry management demands that you clean out the high-fuel areas to prevent catastrophic fires. It makes common sense. Except there are special interest groups, specifically the Sierra Club and others, that say you cannot vote for that bill. They have too much political clout.

If we are talking about politics, holding up the appropriations, let's look at the politics holding up the Interior appropriations bill. That is where the politics are being played. That is why people throughout the West and anywhere where there are national forests are in danger of catastrophic forest fires, because the majority refuses to make their Members vote between cleaning up the forests, preventing the fires, protecting their people, and the Sierra Club. They don't want to make that choice.

That choice is easy. If we can get a vote on it, one way or the other, you may beat us. You may have enough votes to say, no, we don't want to give you that protection. But at least we want to have a vote. Then we can pass the Interior bill. We could get to Labor-HHS. We could get to the CJS bill on which my colleague from South Carolina has worked so hard. We can get to the VA-HUD-independent agencies bill on which I have worked with my colleague from Maryland.

There is politics in the holding up of the appropriations. The politics are not on this side.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, earlier this morning I heard a distinguished colleague on this side of the aisle refer to ending the fiscal year with a \$150 to \$160 billion deficit.

Thereafter, I was astounded to hear a colleague from the other side of the aisle say tax cuts increase revenues. If that latter statement were true, we would just come here and cut taxes every day because that is what we need, revenues. Ever since this President took office, we have run the most astounding debt of a free country. Instead of paying down the debt, there

isn't any question, when he came here he started cutting taxes. He put in an economic team headed by Larry Lindsey—the only fellow in America who thinks the economy is good.

Until you get rid of that economic team and stop this singsong about cutting taxes, and instead start paying down the debt, the economy is not going to recover.

Let me go right to what the debt is because today is October 2, two days since the end of fiscal year 2002. Under law, the Treasurer of the United States is required to publish the public debt every day. We ended the fiscal year 2002 on September 30, with a deficit of \$421 billion, and a debt of \$6.2 trillion, up from \$5.8 trillion last year.

I have been up here 36 years. This is the biggest deficit we have ever had. George the first gave us a \$402 billion deficit. He exceeded the \$400 billion mark. Now George the second, topped it with \$421 billion. The Senator from Oklahoma said that if you cut the taxes, you increase the revenues. George the first called that voodoo. This is voodoo two.

Here is how we got into this particular dilemma, because we all are guilty on both sides of the aisle and on both sides of the Capitol. It was Mark Twain who said that the truth is such a precious thing, it should be used very sparingly.

Well, not really kidding about the truth, going to the seriousness of the truth, it was never better stated than by my friend James Fallows, in his book "Breaking the News" back in 1996, when he related the debate over how you constitute and maintain a strong democratic government.

The debate was between Walter Lippmann and John Dewey, the famous educator. It was Lippmann's contention that what you really need to do is get the best of minds in the particular disciplines—the best fellow on education, the best on forestry and fires, the best fellow on health care, the best fellow on defense, and whatever it is, the experts in the fields—to sit around the table and agree on the needs of the country and their expert solution to the problem of those needs.

John Dewey, the famous educator, said: No, all we need to do is have the free press tell the truth to the American people. And out of those truths, emanating through their representatives, their Senators in Government in Washington, would come the proper programs to strengthen and maintain that democracy.

That for the first time ever gave me the understanding of Jefferson's observation that as between a free government and a free press, he would choose the latter. Obviously, of course, with that free press telling the truth, we would always maintain a strong democracy. But we haven't been telling the truth.

I have been trying for a good 20-some years now, since I was chairman of the Budget Committee, to get us to tell the