

champs. I filled up the tree nine times, and I blocked amendments. What happened? They were all back on the next bill. If I out-maneuvered them and pushed them off from that bill, they were back on the next bill.

In fact, it seemed as though the same 100 amendments appeared on every bill. Sooner or later in the Senate the majority has to ante up and kick in. We have to just let out a little steam, just a little pressure, turn the spigot a tad. If you don't, it is going to blow up in your face.

We are all adjusting to our new roles. We are learning how, once again, to be in the minority. It is not the preferred role, but it is one where we can have an effect, and it can be fun. There is a new majority in town. Lots of power. They are going to run this thing.

No. This is a consensus body. We will adjust. We will learn our new role, the loyal opposition within the Senate, as will the majority.

The one thing I like about our leaders now in the Senate, these are experienced hands. These are not new kids on the block. They know what they are doing. They are naturally going to have to test each other out a bit, but I believe with time we are going to see the Senate make a little more progress.

I wish we could begin that on this bill. We are not going to agree to a deal where the majority leader says: OK, I give you a permission slip to offer an amendment, and by the way, I am also going to tell you what that amendment is. No. No. That is not going to happen. It might happen here, or it might happen there, but the majority cannot ultimately dictate things like this, especially when we are talking about things such as abandoning assistance for AIDS babies.

There are some things we can do with babies who have AIDS. There are drugs that can keep them from being born with AIDS, or to address their problems and they live a happy, normal life. So we don't want to eliminate that funding. That is just one example of where we need to have an amendment in order, and I hope that we will find a way to do that.

Madam President, \$460 billion is a lot of money, and most of it is for very good purposes, but this is the Senate, and I hope we can find order and a way to do this. We could probably get three or four amendments on each side, have some debate on those amendments, and be out of here by next Wednesday and feel as though we did the best we could. I think that would be a good idea. I think it would be good for the country.

I am committed to being here and helping in any way I can. There is nobody here who has ever been in leadership who has clean hands, but I think we ought to learn from the past, learn from the recent past and find a better way to get the job done.

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

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

REMEMBERING LEWIS H. WHITE, JR.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, when most Americans were celebrating annual religious holidays and the beginning of a new year, my family was mourning the loss of one of our favorite and most outstanding relatives, Louis H. White, Jr. Louis White was the husband of my father's sister, Dale White. Their children, Charlotte and Curtis, in addition to being my first cousins, were good friends as well.

Louis White was a member of the famed "greatest generation," made up of those who left homes and families and volunteered to serve in the armed services during World War II. He left college at Mississippi State University and became an officer in the Army Air Corps. He was qualified soon as a pilot of a B-17 and flying combat missions over Germany. He and his crew were shot down eventually, and he spent several months in a prisoner of war camp before being liberated by the Russians as they moved into Germany from the east.

After the war, after completing his engineering studies, graduating from college, he became an outstanding engineer, enjoying a career of great success as a paper company executive, where he designed and managed the operation of several large paper mills in Florida, Alabama, and Texas.

My parents, my brother, and I often enjoyed visits with him and his family during holidays, particularly when they were living on Santa Rosa Island, near Pensacola, FL.

When Louis retired, he was a senior staff project engineer with BE&K, an engineering firm in Birmingham, AL, where he was involved for 11½ years at high levels of management in the paper industry. At his retirement celebration, it was said he should qualify for the "Guinness Book of World Records" because of 52 years of never missing a day of work because of illness or the weather.

His first job, incidentally, was at age 14, when he was a dairy delivery boy. He always was dutiful and dependable. In the German prison camp, for instance, he developed an exercise routine that helped save his life and the lives of those who decided to exercise with him every day. He once told me about a Red Cross package that would come with an assortment of things that would help the prisoners survive, that they included things such as vitamin pills, cigarettes, and other things. He would trade the cigarettes for vitamin pills, for those who wanted to swap.

His example of generosity with his voluntary contributions in the commu-

nities where he lived to the schools his children and grandchildren would attend, helping install, personally, the infrastructure of cables and wiring necessary for all the classrooms to have computers, for example, were marks of his contribution to his community.

The quality of his life, the patriotism he displayed, his courage in battle, his survivability under the most difficult and challenging circumstances in the prisoner of war camps, his loyalty to his family and the level of excellence of his career as an engineer in business and industry are worthy of emulation and high praise.

I extend my heartfelt compassion and love to his wife and family members who miss him greatly. We wish them well and thank them for the support they gave him throughout his life and his career.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania is recognized.

CONGRATULATING SENATOR THAD COCHRAN ON HIS 10,000TH VOTE

Mr. SPECTER. Madam President, I sought recognition for a number of purposes. But first, let me congratulate my distinguished colleague, the senior Senator from Mississippi, for casting his 10,000th vote today. Senator COCHRAN came to the Senate after the 1978 election, having served previously in the House of Representatives for 6 years, and has had an illustrious career. He served on the Judiciary Committee for 2 years and demonstrated, at an early point in his Senate career, his wisdom by leaving the Judiciary Committee after only 2 years. All those hot-button issues—school prayer, abortion, flag burning, et cetera—were not for Senator COCHRAN. He was on the big issues of the day and specialized in appropriations.

He has been the distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee and has an outstanding record. I challenge anybody to search the record, 10,000 votes, and find any mistakes by Senator COCHRAN. It has been, truly, an outstanding career.

Beyond his extraordinary capability as a Senator, he is always of good cheer, always personable, always upbeat. He has made a great contribution to the Senate and to the House before that. He will have many more years of very distinguished service for the Senate.

SENATE RULES CHANGE

Mr. SPECTER. Madam President, I turn to the subject of submitting a resolution which I spoke about yesterday, and I do formally submit the resolution at this time. This resolution will eliminate the practice of filling the tree, which means there is a procedure to eliminate the opportunity of a Senator to offer an amendment.

This is a particularly problematic week for the Senate. We are on Thursday, and twice this week action has

been taken in the Senate, on two separate matters, to foreclose Senators from offering amendments. I spoke on Monday and again yesterday on the subject of U.S. policy in Iraq, and we have a bill which has been offered by Senator LEVIN, and the majority leader was expected to fill the tree, if given an opportunity to do so. No denial has been made of that practice, which was anticipated by the majority leader.

A motion to proceed is a debatable motion under Senate rules. When you have a matter as important as the Iraq war, there ought to be very careful consideration given by the Senate—reputed to be the world's greatest deliberative body. Immediately upon taking up the bill, the majority leader filed a cloture motion. It was kind of odd, even for people not versed in Senate procedure, to bring up a bill which is debatable and immediately to file a motion to cut off debate, but that was what was done.

On the Republican side, there was an interest in having alternative resolutions, ideas considered—by Senator MCCAIN, to support the surge with benchmarks; by Senator WARNER, to express opposition to a surge of 21,500; and by Senator GREGG, to have a resolution which would deal with the prohibition against funding for the troops—which obviously nobody wants to do. The troops are in harm's way. We are not going to cut off funding.

But behind the scenes what was happening was negotiations between Senator REID and Senator MCCONNELL—the agreement could not be reached giving the Republicans a fair opportunity to offer alternative resolutions, so almost all Republicans joined together to reject the cloture motion and keep the debate going.

It is not understood in America what is happening because it is arcane, it is esoteric, it is unintelligible—they can't figure it out. But the popular view, the public perception was the Republicans were trying to protect the President, to cut off debate on the Iraq policy and not to have a vote. That, simply stated, was not true.

I have been on the record for some time, expressing my skepticism about the surge position. There is no doubt that Senator WARNER opposes the President's position because he is the author of the resolution to express disapproval on the surge position. He voted against cloture. No doubt, Senator HAGEL was against the President's proposal. He has been the most severe critic of the President's proposal. Senator HAGEL also voted against cloture, as did almost all Republicans. But the perception was the Republicans were trying to block debate in the consideration of the resolution of disapproval.

After I announced my intention to introduce this rule change, I went to the third floor, to the press gallery, to sit down with the reporters to explain and to answer questions, to try to get a public discussion on what was happening. One of the reporters from the

wire services commented that no story was written about it because it couldn't be explained to anybody beyond the beltway. It could not be explained.

Two of the newspapers on Capitol Hill carried brief stories about it, but the matter has been dropped. Republicans have lost the public relations battle. The issue will be taken up in the House. Maybe it will be reconsidered in the Senate. But this procedure of allowing the majority leader to stop alternative considerations is inappropriate and unfair.

There are some pretty good authorities for the proposition that this procedure is inappropriate. I wish to cite three very distinguished Senators: Senator HARRY REID, the majority leader; Senator RICHARD DURBIN, the assistant majority leader; and Senator CHRIS DODD, Democrat from Connecticut. As I said yesterday, this business about filling the tree has been practiced by both parties. The Congressional Research Service did a study that showed that going back to Senator DOLE in the 1985–1986 Congress, every majority leader has used this procedure—Senator Dole, Senator BYRD, Senator Mitchell, Senator LOTT, Senator Daschle, Senator Frist, and now Senator REID, twice in 1 week. In the fifth week of the new session, it is twice already being used. So that Democrats and Republicans are equally at fault. If people want to know whom to blame in Washington, it is a pretty good conclusion it is equally divided, that the bickering is the responsibility of both parties—a plague on both houses.

But when we Republicans controlled the Senate and we had the PATRIOT Act, Senator REID had this to say on February 28 of last year. He was speaking in defense of a fellow Democrat's ability to offer amendments to the PATRIOT Act reauthorization. This is what Senator REID said:

Of course, even a good bill can be improved. That is why we have an amendment process in the Senate . . . I am disappointed that he has been denied that opportunity by a procedural maneuver known as "filling the amendment tree."

This is a very bad practice. It runs against the basic nature of the Senate. The hallmark of the Senate is free speech and open debate. Rule XXII establishes a process for cutting off debate and amendments, but Rule XXII should rarely be invoked before any amendments have been offered.

That is what Senator REID said less than a year ago. I couldn't say it better. In fact, I couldn't say it as well.

Then, a few days later on March 2, Senator REID said this:

Don't fill the tree. This is a bad way, in my opinion, to run the Senate.

Then Senator DURBIN spoke on May 11 of 2006 on the tax increase prevention and reconciliation act. Speaking about that conference report, this is what Senator DURBIN had to say:

The Republican majority brings a bill to the Senate, fills the tree so no amendments can be offered, and then files cloture, which stops debate. So we cannot have this conversation. We cannot offer amendments.

Well, that is exactly the plan for the Iraq issue, and that is what is being done now on the continuing resolution which has been filed.

Senator DOLE had this to say, speaking about health care legislation:

I want to point out to our colleagues why I am terribly disappointed with the procedures we have been confronted with this evening dealing with this legislation . . . This is the Senate. This Chamber historically is the place where debate occurs. To have a process here this evening . . . to basically lock out any amendments that might be offered to this proposal runs contrary to the very essence of this body . . . If you believe the Senate ought to be heard on a variety of issues relating to the subject matter—when the amendment tree has been entirely filled, then obviously we are dealing with a process that ought not to be . . . the Senate ought to be a place where we can offer amendments, have healthy debate over a reasonable time, and then come to closure on the subject matter.

Well, ARLEN SPECTER doesn't have to say anything more on the subject because Senator REID, Senator DURBIN, and Senator DODD are much more eloquent than I. So I offer this resolution to correct this problem for the future. It is very hard to change a Senate rule, but nobody has proposed it in the past, to my knowledge, and today we will start on it.

Beyond the procedure used by the majority leader, the leader of the Democrats, to shut off debate and consideration of alternative proposals on the Iraq policy, the majority leader has utilized the procedure again on the continuing resolution.

Now the continuing resolution characteristically is a brief document, usually about a page, which says the Government will continue to operate under existing appropriations, since there has not been time to consider a new appropriations package. But what we have in H.J. Res. 20 is an omnibus bill running 137 pages. I want to have an opportunity to amend it. Other Senators want to have an opportunity to amend it. Some have spoken on the floor of the Senate here today. But we are foreclosed from doing so.

When the announcement was made that we were going to go to this kind of a procedure, in my capacity as chairman last year, now ranking member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, I wrote a letter to Senator REID asking that we follow regular order and consider the appropriation bills sequentially. I sent identical letters to Speaker PELOSI, the Republican leader, BOEHNER, in the House, Senator MCCONNELL, Senator BYRD, Representative OBEY, Representative LEWIS, and Senator COCHRAN, the leaders of both bodies and the chairmen and ranking members of both Appropriations Committees. Because if we had the will; we had the time; we had the way, to get it all done. But the leadership has chosen not to follow that path, and now we have a continuing resolution which does not allow for any amendments. That is not in the public interest.

After having been in the Senate for 26 years and being on the Appropriations Committee for 26 years, I have turned into a rubberstamp. That is what the Senators are here, those who did not have a say in the preparation of this continuing resolution. We are all rubberstamps: Take it or leave it. Now we would employ the procedure used on the Iraqi issue to avoid cutting off debate, but the Treasury will run out of money at midnight on February 15—that is Thursday night—so we have the option of closing down the Government if we don't approve this rubberstamp procedure, and we are not going to do that. We had experience with the closing down of the Government back in December of 1995, and it was a very bitter experience; great political peril in closing down the Government.

Here we have a very important measure. For a few minutes I want to point out what has happened to the subcommittee which funds health care, which is our No. 1 capital asset; you can't do anything if you don't have good health, and I can testify to that personally from my own experience in the last 2 years. Secondly, education. If you are not trained, you can't do anything, even with good health. The Department of Labor on job training and worker safety. The level of the budget for fiscal year 2005 was \$143.4 billion. The President has proposed a budget for fiscal year 2008 of \$141.5 billion. If you take a look at the cuts in the budget for Health, Education and Labor and you add in the inflationary factors, the committee is being asked to operate at a level of \$14.7 billion less than the fiscal year 2005 budget. That simply is inadequate to take care of the National Institutes of Health, offering the greatest chance through medical research to find cures for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's and cancer and heart disease; funding for Head Start, funding for Title I, funding for education programs, funding for job training. It simply is totally insufficient.

Those are the kinds of matters we ought to address on this continuing resolution. That is what we ought to be talking about, instead of having our last vote before noon on a Thursday as part of our 5-day workweek. We have yet to see that; we have yet to take the time we need to consider these matters. Had we taken up these appropriations bills in regular order, as I asked the leadership back on January 10, we would have had adequate time to do so.

It is my hope that one day, and hopefully sooner rather than later, the Senate will change its rules so the majority leader will not be able to create a procedural morass to stop Senators from introducing amendments. It is my hope Senator REID's admonitions when the shoe was on the other foot back last year, that filling the tree is a bad practice, it runs against the basic nature of the Senate, the hallmark of the Senate is free speech and open debate, and similar comments by Senator DUR-

BIN and Senator DODD, that we will be able to have a process so when an issue such as Iraq comes before the Senate, we can function as a deliberative body and we can have debate; we can consider alternative matters, and we can decide what U.S. policy should be. Because the President is not the sole decider. It is a shared responsibility; that when we have a budget and a resolution to fund the U.S. Government, we are not shut out from offering amendments.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. RES. _____

Resolved, That (a) rule XV of the Standing Rules of the Senate is amended by adding at the end the following:

"6. Notwithstanding action on a first degree amendment, it shall not be in order for a Senator to offer a second degree amendment to his or her own first degree amendment."

(b) The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect at the beginning of the 111th Congress.

Mr. SPECTER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the summary of the statements of Senators REID, DURBIN, and DODD be printed in the RECORD at this time.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Sen. Reid (NV)—talking to a new Senator in the chair, "she should have seen when the Republicans were in the majority. We didn't have amendments. They filled every tree." 2/6/07 (Tues.) Iraq debate

Sen. Reid (NV)—Speaking in defense of a fellow Democrat's ability to offer amendments to the Patriot Act reauthorization: "Of course even a good bill can be improved. That is why we have an amendment process in the Senate . . . I am disappointed that he has been denied that opportunity by a procedural maneuver known as 'filling the amendment tree.' This is a very bad practice. It runs against the basic nature of the Senate. The hallmark of the Senate is free speech and open debate. Rule [twenty-two] XXII establishes a process for cutting off debate and amendments, but Rule XXII should rarely be invoked before any amendments have been offered . . . I will vote against cloture to register my objection to this flawed process." 2/28/06 Patriot Act Reauthorization

Sen. Reid (NV)—"Don't fill the tree . . . That is a bad way, in my opinion, to run this Senate." 3/2/06 Patriot Act

Sen. Durbin—Speaking about the 2005 Tax Reconciliation conference report: "The Republican majority brings a bill to the Senate, fills the tree so no amendments can be offered, and then files cloture, which stops debate. So we cannot have this conversation. We cannot offer other amendments." 5/11/06 Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act of 2005 Conf. Rept.

Sen. Dodd—Speaking about healthcare legislation: "I want to point out to our colleagues why I am terribly disappointed with the procedures we have been confronted with this evening dealing with this legislation . . . This is the Senate. This Chamber historically is the place where debate occurs. To have a process here this evening . . . to basically lock out any amendments that

might be offered to this proposal runs contrary to the very essence of this body . . . if you believe the Senate ought to be heard on a variety of issues relating to the subject matter—when the amendment tree has been entirely filled, then obviously we are dealing with a process that ought not to be . . . the Senate ought to be a place where we can offer amendments, have healthy debate over a reasonable time, and then come to closure on the subject matter." 05/11/06 Health Insurance Marketplace Modernization and Affordability Act of 2006

Mr. SPECTER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of my letter of January 10 to Senator REID, which notes identical records to the other leaders in the House and Senate, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, January 10, 2007.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR HARRY: In light of the significant problems caused to so many entities funded by the federal government to operate under a continuing resolution, I urge the leaders of both Houses and the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the Appropriations Committees of both Houses to bring the unfinished Appropriation bills for fiscal year 2007 to the floors of the House and Senate as early this year as possible.

The extraordinary problems caused for so many entities are typified by a letter which I received yesterday from Chief Judge Paul Michel of the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. With this letter, I am enclosing a copy of Judge Michel's letter. I am also enclosing a copy of a memorandum prepared by my Staff Director on Appropriations, Bettilou Taylor, itemizing some of the major problems faced by federally-funded entities.

Last year, I tried repeatedly and unsuccessfully to have my Subcommittee's bill on Labor, Health & Human Services and Education brought to the Senate floor for action. My House counterpart, Chairman Ralph Regula, and I were prepared to conclude our bill and wrap it up in a conference report. We could still do so on short order. As an alternative to considering the bills individually, there could obviously be an omnibus bill excluding earmarks which could be taken up in relatively short order.

I know there is other pressing business to be taken up by both Houses on many matters, but we could find time to complete action on key items from last year's appropriation process if we have a sense of urgency to do so.

I appreciate your consideration of this request.

I am sending identical letters to Speaker Pelosi, Representative Boehner, Senator McConnell, Chairman Byrd, Chairman Obey, Representative Lewis and Senator Cochran.

Sincerely,

ARLEN SPECTER.

Mr. SPECTER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter from Judge Paul Michel to me, dated December 18, about the problems caused to the Federal judiciary to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, which was referenced in my letter to Senator REID and others, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE FEDERAL CIRCUIT,
Washington, DC, December 18, 2006.

Hon. ARLEN SPECTER,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR ARLEN: With the new Congressional leadership suggesting a Continuing Resolution at the 2006 appropriated level, the Judiciary is threatened with degradation of essential functions because of increased costs mandated by law. Thus, the funding level of 2006 applied in 2007 has the effect of nearly a ten percent reduction.

Although the Judiciary can and should improve efficiency and do its share of belt-tightening, the funding reduction suggested would impede critical operations to a material degree.

As your own proposals on habeas corpus, NSA wire taps, immigration and other priorities illustrate, federal courts are becoming not less but more important to the welfare of the country and to its security.

I imagine the new leaders are so focused on eliminating earmarks that they are unaware of the operational impact of the cuts being discussed. In addition to the Appropriations Committee and subcommittees, surely the Judiciary Committee has a crucial role here. As a member of the Executive Committee of the Judicial Conference, I would welcome the opportunity to brief you and Senator Leahy on this urgent subject.

Best,

PAUL R. MICHEL,
Chief Judge.

Mr. SPECTER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the chart showing the fiscal impact on the budgetary process from the fiscal year 2005 to the President's recommended budget of 2008 be printed in the RECORD, demonstrating the problems we have on adequately funding health, education, job training, and worker safety.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Fiscal Years 05 Through 07

<i>Dollars in billions</i>	
FY'05 Enacted	\$143.4
FY'06 Enacted	141.5
FY'07 President's Budget	137.4
FY'07 Budget Resolution—Specter/ Harkin amendment passed (73-27) Assumed an additional \$7 billion	
FY'07 302(b) allocation for Labor-HHS over the FY'07 budget	+5.0
FY'07 Senate reported bill	142.4
FY'07 Continuing Resolution thru Feb 15, 2007	142.1
FY'07 H.J. Res 20 plus additional sub- committee allocation	+2.3
Total Labor-HHS in H.J. Res 20	144.4
Total over FY'07 President's budget	+7.0

Fiscal Year 08

<i>Dollars in billions</i>	
FY'05 Enacted	\$143.4
Inflation as measured by the price index for the GDP:	
To restore to the FY'05 level plus FY'06 inflation—3.1	3.5
To restore to the second year (FY'07) inflation—2.5%	2.9
To restore to the FY'08 inflation— 2.4%	2.9

NIH:

To restore NIH plus FY'06 bio- medical inflation—4.5%	1.3
To restore NIH plus FY'07 bio- medical inflation—3.7%	1.1
To restore NIH plus FY'08 bio- medical inflation—3.7%	1.1

<i>Dollars in billions</i>	
FY'08 with inflation only	156.2
FY'08 President's budget	141.5

Shortfall

Based on the updated inflationary costs—the FY'08 President's budget would require an additional \$14.7 billion or 10.4% more to fund programs at the FY'05 inflation adjusted level.

Mr. SPECTER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the summary prepared by the Congressional Research Service as to the use of the procedure to fill the tree since the 99th Congress be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

TABLE 1.—INSTANCES WHERE A SENATE MAJORITY LEADER OR DESIGNEE FILLED THE AMENDMENT TREE: 1985–2006¹

Congress	Senate Majority Leader	Number of times floor leader/designee filled the tree	Measures/subjects on which tree was filled
99th (1985–1986).	Robert Dole (R-KS).	5	Congressional Budget Resolution Public Debt Limit Legislation National Defense Authorization Act
100th (1987–1988).	Robert C. Byrd (D-WV).	3	Parental and Medical Leave Act Campaign Finance Reform Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1987
101st (1989–1990).	George J. Mitchell (D-ME).	0	
102nd (1991–1992).	George J. Mitchell (D-ME).	1	Balanced Budget Amendment
103rd (1993–1994).	George J. Mitchell (D-ME).	9	Economic Stimulus Legislation Gays in the Military Senate Whitewater Investigation Minimum Wage Increase White House Travel Office Investigation Constitutional Amendment on Congressional Term Limits Immigration Control and Financial Responsibility Act
104th (1995–1996).	Robert Dole (R-KS). Trent Lott (R-MS) (As of 06/12/96).	5	
105th (1997–1998).	Trent Lott (R-MS).	3	Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act ISTEA/Transportation Funding
106th (1999–2000).	Trent Lott (R-MS).	9	Education (Ed-Flex) Social Security Lockbox Year 2000 (Y2K) Legislation Africa Growth Act H1-B Visa Immigration Labor-HHS/Ergonomics Homeland Security Act of 2002
107th (2001–2002).	Thomas A. Daschle (D-SD). 01/03/01–01/20/01 and also. 06/06/02–01/07/03. Trent Lott (R-MS). 01/20/01–06/06/02.	1	
108th (2003–2004).	William H. Frist (R-TN).	3	Energy Policy Act of 2003 Class Action Fairness Act Jumpstart our Business Strength Act
109th (2005–2006).	William H. Frist (R-TN).	5	Lawful Commerce in Arms Act Tax Relief Extension Reconciliation USA Patriotic Act Amendments Health Insurance Marketplace Modernization Act

¹ As of September, 2006. Preliminary draft, subject to additional review and revision.

Mr. SPECTER. I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor. I know my colleagues are waiting to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island is recognized.

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. REED. Madam President, I want to speak very briefly about the resolution pending, H.J. Res. 20, the resolution that is funding the Government for the remainder of the fiscal year.

I particularly want to talk about the veterans health care issues in this continuing resolution. This is not a perfect solution to the problem of funding our Government going forward. Nevertheless, it is, I believe, an equitable and fiscally responsible approach, particularly since we are trying to address the failure of the leadership in the last Congress to pass all the appropriations bills.

We are in a very difficult position where this continuing resolution will get us through this fiscal year and allow us to begin to work on the following year 2008 fiscal year appropriations bills and budget so we can take all of those in regular order and hopefully pass them all by the end of this fiscal year, which would be September 30. The continuing resolution we are discussing today freezes the level of spending at most agencies at fiscal year 2006 levels, while at the same time increasing funding for priorities such as caring for our Nation's veterans. This is one of the key priorities Senator BYRD and others insisted upon. Frankly, I want to commend Senator BYRD for his leadership, as well as other members of the Appropriations Committee, for bringing this continuing resolution to the floor.

The resolution before the Senate would make veterans funding a priority by adding \$3.6 billion above the fiscal year 2006 appropriated levels for the VA health care system. This is one of the few areas where there is a substantial growth in spending, and it is appropriate. If we do not take care of our veterans, then we are breaking a trust that they established by serving valiantly in the uniform of the United States, and we are sending a very bad signal to those young men and women who serve today. We honor their sacrifice by taking care of today's veterans, and certainly giving them the confidence that they will be taken care of in the future.

The VA estimates it will treat 219,000 more patients in fiscal year 2007 than it did in fiscal year 2006. So obviously they need the increased resources. The VA estimates it will have 4.2 million more outpatient visits this year than it did in fiscal year 2006, and the Veterans' Administration estimates it will treat almost 26,000 more patients on an inpatient basis this year than it did last year. For medical services and administration not provided, this increase would mean that the VA would be short more than \$250 million a month—not total but \$250 million a month—in funding for critical medical services, leaving the VA with little