

around the globe who fund our spending addiction. Many Americans don't realize that foreign governments hold nearly 50 percent of our public debt, and we are going to ask them to keep on purchasing more. Moreover, many have failed to realize just how bad this spending addiction has gotten. I remember speaking at the Brussels Forum last year, and the Europeans were asking us for more money for NATO. When I pointed out to them that we were borrowing 41 cents for every dollar we spend, a hush fell over the room.

It is time for us to do what needs to be done to fix our country's looming fiscal crisis. So I would like to say to my colleagues that when we vote on the Obama bipartisan tax fix, my vote will be NO. I'm not for any of the compromises. I am not for borrowing another \$800 billion dollars from China, Saudi Arabia, and other countries. To the contrary, I agree with David Walker, former Comptroller of the GAO and former President and CEO of the Peter G. Peterson Foundation, who said, "This 'deal' is not reasonable from an economic, fiscal and social equity perspective. The compromise evidently was 'you give me my tax-cut extensions and more tax cuts, and I'll give you your spending increases.' The result is a bigger bill for our kids, grandkids and future generations of Americans. It's time for Washington to wake up and start dealing with our structural deficits." Maya MacGuineas, president of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, had even stronger words: "This feels more than a bit surreal. On the heels of the work of the White House Fiscal Commission last week on how to get control of the national debt, the White House and Members of Congress choose to engage in a negotiation that involves adding increasingly larger amounts to the debt? It's utterly exasperating."

Madam President, I feel the exact same way. It's time to stop kicking the can down the road and let these tax provisions expire and, as a result, force Congress and the President to make the tough choices about not only these taxes, but the entire tax and entitlement crisis facing our country. Perhaps then we would have enough anger from our constituents that we would act to reform a tax system that is far too complicated and does not encourage the growth we need. I would like to remind my colleagues that since 1986, there have been over 15,000 changes to the Internal Revenue Code and it costs all of us \$240 billion each year to prepare our tax returns. Think of it. If we could simplify the code and make it cheaper to comply even by 50 percent each year, we would save the American taxpayers \$120 billion.

If these expiring cuts are not extended, you can count on it that everyone will take an interest in seeing that we finally deal with a broken tax and entitlement system. Then, perhaps, we will finally get the reforms that will

get the floundering ship that is our country back on even keel. It will restore people's faith in the future of America as well as give comfort to the rest of the world—especially our creditors—that we are on the path to fiscal responsibility. It's time for us to face up to what needs to be done.

I will not, after working my butt off from the day I got here to address a broken tax and entitlement system, have one of my final votes as a U.S. Senator be to kick the can down the road by extending these tax provisions and assuming that our fiscal ills will be taken care of next year. Because, you know what, if the history of our recent Congress is any indication of what will happen, nothing will get done.

Just a few weeks ago, when the President's commission released its report, we started to gain momentum towards these long-overdue reforms. We need to take advantage of that momentum. I feel like we are coming to the last mile in a marathon, and rather than push through to the end, we are about to turn around and go back.

My 45-year experience in government has been that in the absence of a crisis, the tough, but necessary, measures that need to be taken are not taken. If the tax cuts and other provisions expire, you can count on it that everyone will take an interest in seeing that we finally all come to the table to work to address these fundamental issues. It will restore people's faith in the future of America as well as give comfort that we, our country's leaders, understand the need to put our country on a path to fiscal responsibility.

I have a modest proposal. The President should reconvene the same group of individuals that worked on the Bowles-Simpson commission and insist that they continue their dialogue and put a package together that the President can submit to the 112th Congress as soon as possible.

By the way, where is the President's leadership? The New York Times reported that the Obama administration is considering comprehensive reforms, but other reports indicate that, once again, it's more talk without action because no working groups are in the works, no Executive-Congressional meetings have been scheduled. The President needs to get his key folks back to the table with Congress to see if they can't come up with some sort of compromise based on the best commonsense, reasonable, and fiscally responsible proposals that we've heard from his Commission.

And so, to my friends that will remain in the Senate for the 112th Congress, and to those that will be new to this body, God bless you. You have the future of our Nation and the future of my children and grandchildren in your hands.

During my time in office, I have tried my best. I have tried my very best. I am pleased with some of the progress that we've made, but believe-you-me, for someone who's been in government

service for 45 years, as I have already said, nothing happens unless you have a crisis. So that's what we need. A crisis that says now is the time to deal with tax and entitlement reform; now is the time to deal with budget reform; now is the time to curb our spending addiction and growing national debt; now is the time to balance our budgets.

Madam President, I pray that the Holy Spirit will inspire my colleagues to make the right decisions for our country's future. I pray that the results between now and the end of the year will not be another "kick the can down the road—we'll take care of it later," scenario. Madam President, my time in public office has run out, and from my perspective, so has the country's. Our national debt is one of the most important problems we face. Our failure to begin to address this fiscal crisis now will damage our economy, our national and domestic security, and the kind of future we leave to our children and grandchildren.

NOMINATION OF DARRELL BELL

Mr. BAUCUS. Madam President, I rise today in strong support of President Obama's nominee Darrell Bell for U.S. Marshal for the District of Montana, and I call on my colleagues to support his confirmation. As the former police chief for the City of Billings—Montana's largest community—Darrell possesses the qualities necessary to lead Montana's U.S. Marshal's Office. For the last 3½ decades, Darrell has served Montana's law enforcement community with passion and expertise. Since 2006, Darrell has served as a criminal investigator for the Montana Department of Justice, Gambling Control Division.

Darrell served over 30 years with the Billings Police Department, including 5 as the Deputy Chief of Police. Originally from Joliet, Darrell graduated from the Montana Law Enforcement Academy and began his career with the Billings Police Department as a patrolman in 1974. Working his way up the ranks, Darrell has served as a sergeant and then lieutenant of Operations Division as well as captain for the Investigations, Training, and Support Services Division. Upon the request of Billings city administrator in 2005, then-Deputy Chief of Police Bell stepped in to become the Interim Chief of Police. Darrell has served Montana and his community on the executive boards for high-intensity drug trafficking areas and the Montana chiefs of police.

Darrell has a proven track record of bringing folks together, working with local, State, and Federal law enforcement officials to provide a safe environment for Montana's communities. Darrell's experience and leadership in law enforcement will truly be an asset for Montana's U.S. Marshal's Office. Mr. President, I congratulate Darrell on his nomination, in recognition of his continued service to the State of Montana, and I urge the Senate to confirm Darrell Bell's nomination.

TRIBUTE TO MARY MAUGHAN

Mr. BENNETT. Madam President, as I leave the Senate, I want to recognize one staffer in particular, Ms. Mary Maughan. Mary has served for 18 years on my Utah staff. Mary also worked with me on my first campaign for the Senate in 1992. She was the second I person hired on that campaign and has been a loyal and trusted advisor ever since.

Mary brought to my office vast experience, which provided a solid foundation for her service on my staff during my time in the Senate. She was raised in a military family as an Air Force "brat" and consequently built a deep understanding of military culture and operations. Later, as a Foreign Service officer with the Department of State, she spent 18 months in Vietnam during the war and expanded her personal experience and expertise while working in civilian and military-support offices at both provincial and regional levels. She added to her resume with further experience in Washington, where she focused on Middle Eastern issues as the Iraqi desk officer at the Department of State. She also did temporary duty working on Israeli affairs at the Department of Commerce. Embassy duty in Europe and professional and personal travel in significant and volatile areas of the world helped expand her international credentials.

Mary put these credentials to work as part of my Senate staff. She specializes in military and veterans affairs, Department of State and other international issues, as well as homeland security, Department of Justice, and other related programs. Her expertise and fine performance eventually helped her to advance to the position of senior adviser.

I thank Mary for her tireless dedication to the people of Utah and her loyalty and honorable service as a member of my staff for almost two decades. It is with sincere appreciation and gratitude that I congratulate her on her retirement. I look forward to continuing our association in the years to come.

IOWA CITY WEST HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I would like to congratulate the students from Iowa City West High School who will participate in the We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution national finals in Washington, DC. More than 1,200 students from across the United States will visit Washington, DC to take part in the national finals of We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution, the most extensive educational program in the country developed specifically to educate young people about the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. The We the People program run by the Center for Civic Education, with the help of Federal funding, provides an outstanding curriculum that promotes civic competence and responsibility among elementary and secondary students.

I am proud to announce that the students from Iowa City West High School, through their knowledge of the U.S. Constitution, won the State competition and thus were given the distinction of representing Iowa in the national finals.

While in Washington, the students will participate in a three-day academic competition that simulates a congressional hearing in which they "testify" before a panel of judges. Students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of constitutional principles and have opportunities to evaluate, take, and defend positions on relevant historical and contemporary issues. In the end, students take away a solid understanding of the origin of American constitutional democracy as well as the contemporary relevance of our founding documents and ideals. In short, it produces better citizens.

I would like to personally recognize the Iowa City West students who are on the team that will represent Iowa in the national finals, Guo Chen, Jinny Guo, Yelena Shabelnik, John Alatalo, Cole Anderson, Bennett Mueller, Rebecca Wen, Elizabeth Wang, Evan Davis, Eleanor Marshall, Margaret Shultz, Katherine Yang, Trevor Clinkenbeard, Mark Mellecker, Brad Ockenfels, Ray Ockenfels, Nik Hlebotwitsch, Sara McAndrew, Jessica Sheldon, Asya Bergal, Joe Henderson, Hilah Kohen, Jacob Larson, Elizabeth Vandenberg, and teacher Gary Neuzil.

I wish these students the best of luck at the We the People national finals and applaud their outstanding achievement.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

COLORADO KIDS' MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

• Mr. BENNETT. Madam President, today I wish to honor two young heroes from Colorado, who will receive the organization 9-1-1 for Kids' Medal of Honor this week. The medal is bestowed on a young person who distinguishes himself or herself by calling 9-1-1 in an emergency and helps save someone's life or report a crime. An award is also presented to the dispatcher who processed the call and provided the appropriate emergency response.

Earlier this year, Nathan Averhoff, a third grader at Leroy Drive Elementary School in Northglenn, and Abigail Vicioso, a third grader at Skyview Elementary School in Thornton, both found themselves in a difficult situation involving one of their parents.

Nathan, who is 9 years old, called the Thornton Communication Center on April 23 when his mom began having a seizure. Dispatcher Edward Coddington answered Nathan's call and stayed on the phone with him for 6 minutes as Nathan provided updates on his mom's condition. Nathan remained calm and said his dad had told him what to do in

case of a medical emergency. Once the seizure began to subside, Nathan held his mom's head to avoid further injury. His quick actions meant that there was no delay in seeking medical attention for his mom.

On September 8, 9-year-old Abby called 9-1-1 on her cell phone when she found her mother on the bathroom floor, dizzy, weak and vomiting. Dispatcher Karen Salazar of the city of Thornton 9-1-1 Dispatch Center answered her call. Although Abby was scared and worried about her mom, she answered Karen's questions clearly and calmly, enabling Karen to get the proper emergency assistance to Abby's mom, who was eventually transported to a local hospital.

Both of these kids knew exactly what to do. They didn't panic, and they made sure their moms got the care they needed. They and the dispatchers who helped them serve as a great example of how important it is for kids to know what to do when trouble arises.

The organization 9-1-1 for Kids has made it its mission to ensure that kids of all ages understand the importance and proper use of 9-1-1. It does so by raising awareness through conferences, media outreach, training activities, school events, and by highlighting the stories of kids like Nathan and Abby.

I join all Coloradans in offering our gratitude to dispatchers Edward Coddington and Karen Salazar for their service to their communities and congratulate Nathan and Abby for this award as well as their bravery and calm in the face of an emergency. ●

TRIBUTE TO MCKENZIE HALEY

• Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize McKenzie Haley, Miss Rodeo America 2011. McKenzie, a native of my own home State of South Dakota, was crowned Miss Rodeo America on December 4, 2010, at the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas, NV. McKenzie holds a long history of rodeo titles including Junior Miss Rodeo South Dakota 2004, South Dakota High School Rodeo Queen 2005-2006, Miss Black Hills Stock Show and Rodeo 2009, before being crowned Miss Rodeo South Dakota in July of 2009.

McKenzie will spend the next year attending more than 100 rodeos across the United States promoting and serving as a spokesperson for the sport of rodeo. McKenzie is a true ambassador and shining example of South Dakota spirit and values. I wish her all the best and congratulate her on her accomplishments as she embarks on her exciting journey as Miss Rodeo America 2011. ●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.