

See what it is like when you have children, even 1 and 2 years old, in the early Head Start Program or 3, 4 and 5 in the full Head Start Program. See the enthusiasm that exists with these children.

I have an indication of that here—this card. It was Valentines Day when I went to the city of Perth Amboy. Oddly enough, Perth Amboy is where the first signature on the Bill of Rights was made, in New Jersey—the Bill of Rights. Here is an opportunity that is certainly a right, to be able to learn. I get notes from these children—flattering, by the way, and not because of my looks. They say:

Dear Representatives: We love coming to school. We learn languages. We can be scientists. We can be artists. We can be authors and illustrators. We are lifetime learners.

Here they talk in less precise handwriting about how nice it is to be able to come to school. The design of this makes it a little tougher presentation:

Dear Mr. Representative: We love our preschool class. We learn to write. We explore science. We explore changing things in the world. We love to be here in school.

We love it when they are there because we know that not only are their lives going to be improved substantially, but also they are going to be contributing citizens to the society we live in.

So this is amazing and often neglected. I asked for some indication of what happens at Head Start. But let me say, first of all, all those children are beautiful. I never saw so many beautiful children in my life. I am a professional grandfather. I have 13 grandchildren. My wife brought 3 to the marriage and I had 10. There is nothing like seeing a 1½-year-old learning, a 2-year-old learning.

What we have found is that by the age of 1, most children begin linking words to meanings. They understand the names used to label familiar objects—body parts, arms, legs, animals, and people. At about 18 months, they add new words to their vocabulary at the astounding rate of one every 2 hours. By age 2, most children have a vocabulary of several hundred words and can form simple sentences, such as “Go outdoors” or the traditional “All gone.” Between 24 to 30 months, children speak in longer sentences, and from 30 to 36 months kids can usually recite the alphabet and count from 1 to 10. The fact is, they are learning something.

By kindergarten, kids are beginning to turn the pages of the book, and they start learning to read by about 5 years of age. There is a real reward for the country when they do that. Our society receives nearly \$9 in benefits for every \$1 invested in Head Start children. It leads to an increase in achievement and lots of good things.

I learned a little bit the hard way about what Head Start means when I and a business partner of mine went back to a school we went to as kids. We went to the sixth grade and offered a

scholarship program to youngsters in the sixth grade to pick up a large part of their college tuition. For 28 young people in our class, we would contribute toward a large part of their college tuition if they were accepted at any one of 30 colleges picked at random. We had counselors, and we brought them down here. I was able to take them on a visit to the White House, where Vice President Dan Quayle was very generous with his time, and I took them to the company I was running so they could see.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. MCCASKILL). All time dedicated to the majority has expired.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Madam President, you say there is no time left on our side for a presentation?

I will wrap this up very quickly, if I might. Just a couple words.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the Senator continuing?

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, if the Senator is truly going to wrap it up, I don't object.

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

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I thank my colleague and friend from Maine.

Very simply, we now see what the problem was. We analyzed it thoroughly. The problem was we started too late. In the sixth grade, it was too late to get a learning habit. Now we see these little tots and how quickly they are learning, how quickly they talk, and how quickly they adapt.

These children will suffer the pain created by Republicans' cuts—shame on us if we don't stop them. You have to wonder why children are their No. 1 target? Did children cause the financial crisis? Were Head Start kids engaging in credit default swaps with mortgage-backed securities?

You have to wonder if House Republicans think this is the case. They want to decimate Head Start by cutting its funding by \$1 billion. If they have their way, roughly one-quarter of all children in Head Start will be kicked out of the program. This includes 3,700 kids in my State of New Jersey, like the kids at the Head Start Center I visited last week and the kids who sent these Valentines Day cards. How can we tell these children: Forget about getting a head start. You must go to the back of the line.

The fact is, the House Republican budget will poison our future. Their prescription for America's kids is toxic. If we want our country to succeed, we must invest in its future—and that means protecting and inspiring our children. So let's reject shame and pain. Let's reject the disastrous House Republican budget plan. Let's invest in our kids and win the future. Our country's children deserve nothing less.

Madam President, I thank my colleague from Maine for the courtesy, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

DOD FUNDING AMENDMENT

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I rise to express my deep concern that the Senate has yet to consider the Defense appropriations bill for fiscal year 2011.

As the Presiding Officer is well aware, we should have completed work on this bill and every other appropriations bill before October 1 of last year. But with the Department of Defense, this is becoming increasingly problematic. For this reason, along with two members of the Republican leadership, Senator ALEXANDER and Senator BARRASSO, I have filed an amendment to the patent reform bill that would fund the Department of Defense for the remainder of this fiscal year.

Just think what we have done the last 3 weeks. We took up an FAA reauthorization bill. Then we went on recess for a week. And now we are on a patent reform bill. I don't mean to suggest that FAA and patent reform are not important—certainly we could have gone without having a recess—but both of those bills pale in comparison to the urgency of providing our service men and women with the resources they need to carry out their mission.

Secretary Gates, Admiral Mullen, and other military leaders have repeatedly and clearly warned us about the dangers of failing to pass a full-year Defense funding bill. It is hurting our national security and harming our readiness. Secretary Gates' put it bluntly, saying: “The continuing resolution represents a crisis at our doorstep.” Deputy Secretary of Defense William Lynn testified that “a year-long CR will damage national security.”

At no time in recent memory has Congress failed to pass a Defense appropriations bill. Even when there was a year-long continuing resolution for most of the government during fiscal year 2007, the Congress passed a separate bill funding the Department of Defense. With troops in harm's way, now is not the time to break with that precedent.

If we do not provide the authority for the Air Force to buy unmanned aerial vehicles to fly combat air patrols over Afghanistan, the fighting there will not be halted until we do so. If we do not act to provide the \$150 million that has been requested to meet the very specific and urgent requirements of our special forces, we will be failing those who are truly on the frontlines.

Secretary Gates has made it clear, military readiness will suffer because of fewer flying hours for our pilots, fewer steaming days for our ships, and cutbacks in training for home-stationed forces.

A full year's CR will also delay much needed modernization of our military equipment. This would come at a time when our Navy is at its smallest size since 1916 and at a time when the aircraft and our Air Force inventory are older than at any time since the Air Force was created. The Navy will not

be able to procure a second Virginia class submarine nor a DDG-51 destroyer needed to keep costs down and to achieve the minimum size fleet—313 ships—that the Navy has stated is the absolute minimum.

Operating under a full-year's CR also means that the taxpayers are going to end up paying more for less. The Navy would likely have to renegotiate some of its procurements. The Army has already shut down work on the Stryker Mobile Gun System that will likely incur additional costs to restart.

It is also important to recognize that at a time when the American public is most concerned about jobs and the economy, the Defense appropriations bill provides funds that are the source of thousands of jobs in the United States—jobs that will be lost or at least deferred.

The Secretary of the Navy has said that the combined effects of failing to fund the Defense Department will directly affect the strength of the industrial base and that more than 10,000 private sector jobs at shipyards, factories, and Navy and Marine Corps facilities across the country will be jeopardized.

I could go on and on listing the ways our servicemembers and our DOD civilian workforce and the private sector contractors will be affected by our failure to act. There is simply no excuse for this Senate not to have acted last year on a Defense appropriations bill. Surely, we should turn our attention to focusing on the needs of our military immediately, and we should heed the warning of Secretary Gates, who said:

That is how you hollow out a military—when your best people, your veterans of multiple combat deployments, become frustrated and demoralized and, as a result, begin leaving military service.

Let's do what is most important and let's do it now. Let's pass the Defense appropriations bill.

I wish to thank the ranking member of the Budget Committee, Senator SESSIONS, for yielding me time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

THE BUDGET

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I wish to share some remarks about the budget. I note how pleased I have been to work in this past year with the Presiding Officer on some legislation that I think, had we had just a couple more votes, we would have made progress and done something worthwhile to help ensure that our spending does not range above our budget, as too often has been the case in our country.

The fact is the American people, by large numbers from polling data, believe we are on the wrong track, and the intelligentsia, the witnesses we have had before the Budget Committee—I am ranking member of that committee—keep telling us we are on an unsustainable path. Witnesses called by the Democrats or Repub-

licans, the professional CBO witnesses from all walks of intellectual and business life, say we are on an unsustainable debt path. They are not kidding. They meant that, and the words mean something. We cannot continue what we are doing.

Admiral Mullen, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, recently said:

I believe that our debt is the greatest threat to our national security. If we as a country do not address our fiscal imbalances in the near-term, our national power will erode and the costs to our ability to maintain and sustain influence could be great.

He said if we do not address it in the near term—not just in the long term, in the near term.

Recently, on February 17, Secretary Geithner, the Secretary of the Treasury, appeared before the Budget Committee, and we went over the President's budget. He was, I will have to say, more candid than was OMB Director Jack Lew. I was asking him about the situation we are in and the effect of the budget that allows the debt to double in the next 10 years—causes the debt to do so. He said, "It is an excessively high interest burden."

I was asking about the fact that the money we borrow, the debt we assume we have to pay interest on.

It is unsustainable . . . with the President's plan, even if the Congress were to enact it, and even if Congress were to hold to it and reduce those deficits as a percentage of GDP over the next 5 years, we would still be left with a very large interest burden and unsustainable obligations over time.

It is pretty clear we are on an unsustainable path, and it is pretty clear the American people are exactly correct—we are on the wrong track. We are headed the wrong way. We need to get off of that.

So what is it that we have been presented with? We are presented with a plan. We call it a budget, but it is really the administration's plan for what we are going to collect and spend over the next 10 years. They can plan to raise taxes, they can plan to cut spending, they can plan to increase spending and borrow more money. They can plan. That is their plan.

So we got a plan 2 weeks ago. In that, the President told us this:

What my budget does is put forward some tough choices, some significant spending cuts, so that by the middle of this decade our annual spending will match our annual revenues. We will not be adding more to the national debt.

That is a pretty clear statement, right? It is actually a breathtaking statement to me because I know how hard it is to do that, but he said it flatly and plainly:

Our annual spending will match our annual revenues. We will not be adding more to the national debt.

Jake Tapper, the ABC reporter, at a White House press briefing a couple of weeks ago asked Mr. Carney, the press flack, about this dramatic statement. He asked him if he thought "we will not be adding to the national debt" is a statement that will withstand scrutiny.

"Mr. Carney: Absolutely."

I don't know what world people are living in. Are we communicating in English or some other language? This budget that is presented to us comes nowhere close to living within our means, matching expenditures and revenues, and not adding more to the debt.

Look at this chart. These are the President's numbers, the numbers that have been put out here, and this is what we have been asked to pass. It is before the Budget Committee. I wish it were not so, what we have. I know it is not easy to offer these numbers. I know Senator McCASKILL knows that. She has looked at that. But I think we have to begin to alter them a lot.

Look, in 2010 our total debt, the gross debt of the United States, is \$13.5 trillion. In 10 years, under the President's budget—these are numbers in his budget document that he submitted to us—it goes to \$26.3 trillion. Not projecting a war, not projecting another recession, both of which, I guess, could occur during that time. We are living on the absolute edge—actually, almost over the edge, what we are doing and spending. It is \$13 trillion in new debt.

Let me make this point. Not 1 year between now and 2021, the 10th year, does the annual deficit fall below \$600 billion. This is an unbelievable number. President Bush was hammered when he had a \$450 billion budget, his highest, and he was correctly criticized for that. The lowest that is projected over 10 years is \$26.3 trillion. Last year's budget deficit was \$1.3 trillion. The deficit we expect this year is going to be—on September 30, when September 30 rolls around, the estimates are that the total annual deficit this year will be \$1.6 trillion, the highest we have ever had in the history of the Republic. Nothing was ever seen like it. It does project down some. All the projections are showing it will show some drop down, but they are heading back up in these outyears of 2019, 2020, 2021. The budget deficits are going up there. So this is not a sustainable budget. It is not a sustainable path for us to be on as a nation. We cannot continue on this path. It is a great threat to us.

This week, Chairman CONRAD, the very able Democratic chairman of the Budget Committee, knowledgeable and fair, has been having hearings. We have had the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Energy, and the Secretary of Transportation testify to us about their portion of this overall budget, this budget that would double the debt in 10 years.

What do you think Education is asking for? What are they asking for?

Think about, back in your States, what you have been reading about cities' school systems and county school systems in States cutting budgets, having to do with less, reducing costs, reducing teachers—reducing costs in any way they can. They have been doing a lot of things they have had to do. Some of them are probably going to make that system stronger in the future, but