

do. Leader REID's proposal does that—a \$2.7 trillion reduction in the deficit with a \$2.7 trillion increase in the debt ceiling.

The second thing the Republicans have asked for—not all but many—is that we can't consider revenues in the package. Now, I disagree with that. I don't believe you can have a credible plan to deal with the deficit unless you include revenues, getting rid of the loopholes, getting rid of shelters. We could do that without increasing rates. We have said that many times. But the Reid proposal—what we would vote on by August 2 that accomplishes our goals—will do it without additional revenues. It preserves the right of revenues in order to have a credible plan to reach the \$4 trillion target, but we get our \$2.7 trillion without any revenues—something the majority of Republicans have been asking for.

The third point: The \$2.7 trillion in cuts the majority leader put on the table represents cuts that have been negotiated between the Democrats and Republicans. Madam President, \$1.2 trillion was included with Vice President BIDEN, the \$1 trillion in cuts in regard to our overseas operations was included in the Ryan budget, and the list goes on. So these are cuts that are achievable, that have already been negotiated or agreed to between Democrats and Republicans.

I applaud Senator REID. I think Senator REID understands the seriousness of us moving forward. It allows us to move to increase the debt ceiling and preserve our rights to negotiate and get the grand bargain done and has a fallback mechanism with a joint committee that would have required votes on the floor to make sure we all have a chance to vote up or down. It preserves our options, allows America to move forward, and allows us to concentrate on job growth and security, which should be our focus as we rebound our economy for the future of our Nation. For all those reasons, I hope my colleagues will support the effort of Senator REID to bring us together to avoid the unspeakable default that could occur 1 week from today.

Madam President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

Mr. MCCONNELL. Last night, the President explained to the Nation the crisis we face right now as he sees it. His hope was to lift the debate out of

the gritty legislative particulars, and we all understand that. Unfortunately, the situation the President described last night bears very little resemblance to the realities on the ground right here in Washington.

I know the President would rather give speeches about our problems than resolve them, but he wasn't elected to talk about the United States; he was elected to lead it. In our system of government, that means working with people and a Congress with which you sometimes disagree. This is not a unique situation. Other Presidents have been in a similar situation where they had to work with a Congress composed of people, many of whom disagreed with them.

Last night, the President rejected not just the only proposal that has passed either House of Congress, he rejected the only plan the Democrats have proposed as well, a plan that would increase the debt limit without raising taxes. Just a few days ahead of a potential default, the President announced that he is the only person in Washington still calling for a massive tax hike, even as his party has dropped their own demands for what we know will make the current unemployment situation even worse.

In short, the President is now clinging to two things we all know Congress can't support: a massive tax hike and the biggest debt limit increase in history aimed, in his own words, at getting himself past the next election. As Speaker BOEHNER said last night, that is just not going to happen. There is bipartisan opposition to it in Congress. So it was deeply irresponsible, in my view, for the President of the United States to present the American people with a false choice last night between tax hikes on the one hand and default on the other.

The real choice is this: a bill that can get us past this moment of crisis, that cuts Washington spending, and that actually gets through Congress, or one that can't. Republicans have offered the only proposal that attempts to get at the root of the problem and that actually has a chance of getting to the President's desk. That is why we will continue to press for the legislation Speaker BOEHNER has proposed, and that is why we will fight against anything that pretends to solve the problem but doesn't. The majority leader proposed a plan yesterday that is nothing more than another attempt to pull the wool over the eyes of the American people.

The decisions we make in the next 72 hours will have a real impact on every American. These decisions should be made based on how they will affect the people who are struggling to get a job, not how they affect some politician's chances of getting reelected.

The President can claim to be concerned about this impending crisis, but one question continues to linger above every press conference he has called or every speech he has delivered: Where is

his plan to resolve it? Republicans have proposed multiple plans that have support in both parties. It is time for the President to put his electoral interest and preferences aside and do what is needed. Americans are waiting. Americans are waiting for the President to do what they elected him to do—not to lecture but to lead.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, throughout the course of this debt ceiling debate, the American people have watched in utter disbelief of what they have seen. They understand we need to get our fiscal house in order; they see what has gotten us into this mess; and they want it stopped before they agree to give us blanket authority to raise the debt limit. What they are saying is we must spend within our means just as they have to do.

We have a way to do that. It is the cut, cap, and balance plan. It has already passed the House. The companion bill, with 39 cosponsors, has the support so it should be considered in this Chamber as well. I am proud to say I am one of those 39 cosponsors of the Senate bill. I signed onto the cut, cap, and balance bill because the American people—and more specifically the people of Arkansas—have demanded that we address this crisis now, not later. They know Washington is not good with remembering to follow through on the things they promise to do later.

Some will say this is too simple an answer. They say the fiscal mess in which we find ourselves is a complex problem. It is not though. Just look at the numbers.

This year alone we will spend \$3.7 trillion while collecting only \$2.2 trillion. We borrow 40 cents of every dollar we spend.

President Obama and the Democratic majority in this Chamber will say the way to fix this problem is to raise taxes. They may try to use other words and phrases such as revenue enhancers while talking about raising taxes, but make no doubt about it, they want to put the onus back on the American people.

There is a major problem with this approach. Washington does not have a revenue problem; it has a spending problem. Again, the numbers back this up. Traditionally, government spending is about 19 percent of our gross domestic product. Since President Obama has been in office, government spending has been much closer to 25 percent of our gross domestic product. This administration has raised Federal spending to the highest peak since World War II.

How do we solve this spending problem? We do it through cut, cap, and balance. Cut now—the House bill immediately cuts over \$100 billion in spending; cap for the future—the spending cap mechanism in this bill caps spending over the next 10 years, bringing it down to less than 20 percent of our gross domestic product within the next 5 years—and the balance is for a balanced budget amendment, something our entire Republican caucus supports in the Senate, as do many in the Democratic majority, at least according to their on-the-record statements.

This bill prohibits the Treasury from borrowing unless a balanced budget amendment is sent to the States for ratification. Let's pass a balanced budget amendment and give the people back home the decision about whether they want to require us to operate under a balanced budget amendment. I think you will find they overwhelmingly do. Unfortunately, the Senate majority, with no plan of their own for reining in the out-of-control spending, will not allow us to have a debate on this bill.

Last Friday they moved to table the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act, effectively ending any consideration of the bill. All this reminds me of the debate over the House-passed budget we had a few months ago. The majority over here had strong words of criticism but no budget proposal of their own. Again, strong words of criticism and no plan of their own. Only this time it is worse.

With our Nation on the brink of default, the majority clearly believes it is better to score political points than have a debate on the merits of our proposal. They control the floor, the agenda, and the amendments that are accepted. If any member of their caucus wants to change the bill, they certainly have that option. But instead of having the debate, we get political theater from the majority.

This is not what our constituents deserve. They deserve a real debate. They sent us here to work together to prevent a catastrophe on par with what has happened in Greece, Ireland, and Portugal. They want to see us get our fiscal house in order. That is what the root cause of this crisis is all about. We are not just having a debate on raising the debt ceiling. If that were all this discussion was about, it would have been over months ago. Nobody wants a default.

The debate that is going on today is about a much bigger problem: the out-

of-control spending that has put us in this position time and time again. Cut, cap, and balance is one way to solve the problem. It is a solution that helps us avert an immediate meltdown and brings a sense of fiscal responsibility to Washington where it is so badly needed.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE MILITARY PAY ACT OF 2011

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Madam President, I rise today to speak about the Military Pay Act of 2011. We were on the brink of closing down government earlier this year, this spring, and we came to a responsible conclusion and continued our government. We were also able to continue the tax cuts that have helped spur our economy as best they could in light of the spending and the debt that has been accumulated. Now we are looking at yet another potential government shutdown. It is so important that we make priorities.

We know what is happening right now in Washington. Everyone is focused on whether there is going to be an agreement to lift the debt ceiling because if there is not, then we have the potential for default, depending on the decision of what gets paid first. We do have revenue coming in that can be spent even if the debt ceiling is not lifted. However, the President can choose the priorities. What I am asking we do today is set some of those priorities. What I am asking is we take our military personnel out of any limbo. Let's go back to what we did earlier this year when we were in the continuing resolution debate which also had the potential for shutting down government. When that happened in April, I joined with my colleague on the House side, Representative LOUIE GOHMERT. We both introduced a bill, the Ensuring Pay for Our Military Act, Senate bill 724. We have 80 cosponsors of that legislation. We have 80 out of 100 in the Senate who stepped up to the plate and said: Yes, we need to take care of our military even if government shuts down. That was April. Since then, I have introduced a new bill. The new bill is Senate bill 1365, the Protecting Military Pay Act of 2011. That one sets two priorities. It sets paying our debt, the interest on our debt and our military. Those are the two priorities. Social Security is in a different account, and it will automatically be paid from that account. I actually am cosponsoring another bill that is also cosponsored by many Senators and many House Members that

would require the President pay our debt, interest on our debt, our active-duty military and also Social Security recipients even though that would automatically happen. The legislation I introduced in April that would take care of our active-duty military is supported by the Military Officers Association of America; the AMVETS, the American Veterans; and the National Military Family Association. The new bill I have introduced that has the debt to be paid off along with our military sets the priorities, and here is what it does: It says if we have any kind of government shutdown or we have a situation where we do not lift the debt ceiling and, therefore, we have to prioritize our spending according to the revenue that is coming in, there are two things that will be done: We want to pass the law so there can be no discretion that you will pay the debts and you will pay the military. You will pay the active-duty military. That is what the bill does simply and clearly.

Here is the situation: If the debt ceiling is reached, \$29 billion would be set aside for August to the payment of our debts, \$2.9 billion would be added to that for active-duty military pay. So you are allocating out of the billions that would be coming in in August, you would allocate those as the first two priorities and Social Security would be paid out of the Social Security fund. I am going to ask our majority leader to let these bills come up—at least one of them that says we will pay the debt, we will pay our military, and we know that Social Security will be paid.

It is tremendously damaging for our military to be getting the news in Afghanistan and Iraq of all the upheaval in Washington because they are getting the news, of course. For them to worry: Oh, my gosh, what happens August 2 if my paycheck isn't there for my wife or my husband to be able to use that to pay the mortgage or the basic expenses? I want to put it in perspective. We have people in the military with boots on the ground by the thousands who are making under \$20,000 a year. Those are people who are living paycheck to paycheck. They don't have the luxury of having a big savings account with that kind of income, especially if they have children. My goodness, they are making under \$18,000 a year, some of these younger junior members of the enlisted corps, so I don't think we ought to make them worry for 10 seconds if they can pay their basic bills for their housing and the food for their families.

In my State of Texas there are 28,000 brave men and women deployed in the support of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. There are more than 97,000 servicemembers deployed who are married and have children waiting for them at home. There are 145,000 troops deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan who are working long hours every day in the desert heat to protect our freedom, to make sure we are doing everything we can to root out the terrorists who