

don't think anyone here would disagree with me when I say it—we can't keep borrowing \$120 billion every month or more, because the point and the day will come when the people who lend us that money will stop lending us that money. If we keep doing this for long, we will one day reach a day in this country where we will face a debt crisis, but it won't be because of the debt limit or because of gridlock in Washington. It will be because folks are no longer willing to buy America's debt because they seriously doubt our ability to pay it back.

That is not hyperbole. It is not an exaggeration. It is a mathematical, indisputable fact that no Member of either party would dispute. There is general agreement on this. And there is general agreement the only way to solve this problem is a combination of two things: No. 1, this government needs to generate more revenue; and No. 2, this government needs to restrict its growth and spending. Because as bad as the \$300 billion a month looks, it only gets worse from here on out, in ways I don't have time to explain in the next 10 minutes. Suffice it to say our economy isn't growing. It is not producing enough revenue moving forward. Meanwhile, all the programs we fund are about to explode in their growth because more people than ever are going to retire, they will live longer than they have ever lived, and the math doesn't add up. These are facts. No one disputes that.

The debate in Washington is not about that fact but about how do we solve it. How do we generate more money and reduce the spending at the same time? I will tell you this is not a debate we will solve in the month of August. In fact, I believe it will characterize the rest of this Congress, the 2012 elections, and the years that lie ahead. The division on how to solve it goes to the root of the dispute we face in America between two very different visions of America's future—by the way, one not more or less patriotic than the other. Patriotic, country-loving Americans can disagree on their future vision of what kind of country we should be. But this division—this difference of opinion—is the reason why even though this bill passed, this debate we have had is going to move forward for some time to come.

On the one hand, there are those who believe the job of government is to deliver us economic justice—which basically means an economy where everyone does well or as well as possibly can be done. There is another group who believes in the concept of economic opportunity—where it is not the government's job to guarantee an outcome but to guarantee the opportunity to fulfill your dreams and hopes. One is not more moral than the other. They are two very different visions of the role of government in America. But it lies at the heart of the debate we are having as a nation. Washington is divided because America is divided on

this point, so we have to decide what every generation of America before us has decided, and that is what kind of government do we want and what role do we want it to have in America's future.

The fault lines emerge from that. The solutions emerge from those two visions. For those who want to see economic justice, their solution is to raise more taxes. They believe there are some in America who make too much money and should pay more in taxes. They believe our government programs can stimulate economic growth. They believe that perhaps America no longer needs to fund or can no longer afford to fund our national defense and our military at certain levels.

Another group believes that, in fact, our revenues should come not from more taxes but from more taxpayers; that what we need is more people being employed, more businesses being created that will pursue tax reform, that will pursue regulatory reform. But, ultimately, we look for more revenue for government from economic growth, not from growth in taxes. We believe the private sector creates these jobs, not government and not politicians; that jobs in America are created when everyday people from all walks of life start a business or expand an existing business.

I believe and we believe in a safety net program, programs that exist to help those who cannot help themselves, and to help those who have tried but failed to stand up and try again but not safety net programs that function as a way of life, and believe that America's national defense and our role in the world with the strongest military that man has ever known is still indispensable.

These are two very different visions of America and two very different types of solutions. Ultimately, we may find that between these two points there may not be a middle ground; that, in fact, as a nation and as a people we must decide what we want the role of government to be in America moving forward.

Let me close by saying this has been a unique week for me in a couple ways. One has been, of course, the debate that has happened. The other is my family has been here for the better part of a week, young children. We had an opportunity today after the vote to walk around a little bit and look at all the statues and the monuments that pay tribute to our heritage as a people. It reminds us that we are not the first Americans who have been asked to choose what kind of country we want or what role of government we want in our country. It is a choice every generation before us has had to make.

Even in this Chamber, as I stand here, you can sit back and absorb the history of some of the extraordinary debates that took place on this very floor, debates that went to the core and to the heart of what kind of country we wanted to be moving forward. The

voices of those ancients call to us even now to remind us that every generation of America has been called to choose clearly what kind of country they want moving forward. And that debate will continue. It will define the service of this Congress and for most of us who are here now. I pray we choose wisely. I look forward to the months that lie ahead that we will choose and make the right choice for our future and for our people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the period for morning business be extended until 6:00 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I appreciate the Senator from Minnesota being willing to stay in the chair for a few more minutes before I have to preside so I can take this time to express my concern about what has happened with the failure to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration.

The authorization for that administration has expired, and it has led to a partial shutdown of that agency and to 4,000 workers being placed on unpaid furlough. A number of those workers are from New Hampshire. While I know all of us here are glad we were able to come together to reach a bipartisan agreement on raising the debt ceiling and avoiding a financial crisis, I am deeply disappointed that bipartisanship has failed us when it comes to reauthorizing the FAA.

I understand the House may head home for recess today and for the rest of August, stranding 4,000 FAA workers and as many as 70,000—that is right, 70,000—airport construction workers around the country who are out of work until we can get an agreement. So let me review for a minute how we got here.

Since the FAA's authorization expired in 2007, Congress has passed 20 short-term extensions of the FAA. All of those bills, every single one of them, were clean bills intended to keep the FAA running while Congress decided how to deal with the complicated policy issues of a long-term reauthorization. Unfortunately, the 21st time around—that is the time that we are in—the House decided it was no longer important to keep the FAA operating, and 4,000 people are out of work while the House of Representatives may head home for recess.

I appreciate that there are some significant differences between the two long-term FAA authorization bills

passed by the House and the Senate, the most controversial of which centered around the ruling by the National Mediation Board on unionization rules. But that is why Chairman ROCKEFELLER and Ranking Member HUTCHISON appointed Members to a conference committee where the House and Senate could work out our policy differences. So far, the House has refused to appoint conferees. Instead, they have decided to stop negotiating and, unfortunately, to play politics with 4,000 FAA workers and their families.

Right now the FAA has been shut down for 11 days and as long as that shutdown continues, the government will continue to lose \$200 million a week, about \$30 million a day, that would pay for airport maintenance and safety and for the replacement of our country's outdated air traffic control system. If the shutdown continues through the August recess, we are going to lose over \$1 billion in revenue that could be used to upgrade our air transportation system. That is waste of the worst kind, and it makes our deficit problems worse at a time when everybody says they are so focused on the deficits.

Every day the shutdown continues has a very real, very painful impact on people all around the country who have been furloughed. I hope the House, in leaving for recess, has left open the opportunity to continue to address this dispute and resolve it in a way that will bring everybody back to work.

The FAA has issued stop-work orders for 241 airport construction projects worth nearly \$11 billion that support 70,000 jobs. Again, these are real people who are being forced to make real sacrifices.

In my State of New Hampshire, a \$16 million project to rebuild the runway of Boire Field in Nashua will be delayed if we don't pass an extension. Boire Field is the busiest general aviation airport in New England, and breaking ground this fall on the runway reconstruction project would have created 50 jobs. Instead, because of this delay, construction likely won't begin until spring and those 50 people are going to have to wait, something that shouldn't have to happen. The tragedy is they won't have jobs, not because they don't have the skills or that the project isn't needed but because the House is playing politics with the FAA. Forty-two employees at the FAA's air traffic control center in Nashua have been furloughed and this shutdown is taking a terrible toll on them. I want to tell you about one, Steve Finnerty from Bedford.

I talked to Steve earlier today. He is a civil engineer and he has worked for the FAA for the last 15 years. He is the sole breadwinner for his family of five. He has a young daughter and a pair of 1-year-old twins who are struggling with medical issues. He has already lost nearly 2 weeks of pay, and he is not sure that he is going to get that

pay back even when he does go back to work. He is concerned, understandably, about how he is going to pay his mortgage and his doctor bills and the grocery bills and all the other needs his family has. Now he is facing the possibility of an entire month without pay.

There are thousands of people all across the country who are stuck in the same circumstance who want to get back to work, who we need to get back to work. We need them to get back to work so they can pay their mortgages and their children's college tuitions and their medical bills. We need them to get back to work so they can continue to build a GPS-based air traffic control system like every other industrialized country has. We need to get this economy moving again. That means we need to be serious about our responsibilities here in Washington. Let's pass a clean extension of the FAA. Let's get these people back to work, and let's go about the business of rebuilding a modern air traffic control system like we should have in the United States.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant parliamentarian proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. 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.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, I ask consent to speak as in morning business.

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

RECOGNIZING THOM RUMBERGER

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, I rise to recognize the important contributions of a special Floridian for his unrelenting determination to protect one of our Nation's unique natural resources; that is, the Florida Everglades. He is a prestigious attorney. He is a commanding litigator. This individual, Thom Rumberger, has dedicated much of his personal and professional life to advancing the restoration and protection of the river of grass. His brilliant, incisive mind, his creativity, and his fearlessness combine to make Thom one of Florida's most influential Everglades leaders.

He has been a man proud to serve his country and his community. It goes back to the time he interrupted his college career to volunteer for the Marines. He served in the Korean war. Over the course of his life, he has continued this service as a dedicated public servant, a respected judge, and a respected prosecutor.

In his family, he is a dedicated father and grandfather who obviously has always found great happiness with that

ever-expanding family of his, and the relentless efforts he undertakes to preserve Florida's natural heritage is a legacy gift, certainly to his family and to his colleagues but to all us Floridians—indeed, to us as residents of planet Earth.

He served 2 years in the Marines, earned his degree with honors, a law degree, and was associate editor of the Florida Law Review. He became the youngest circuit judge serving in a district in central Florida. He was the Brevard County solicitor, he was special assistant State attorney, he was county attorney for Seminole County, he was Assistant to the Florida Governor, and he served as a member of the Florida Land Sales Board.

I knew Thom back in those early days in Melbourne and Brevard County as we were experiencing the explosive growth, at the time, of the Nation's attempt to catch up with the Soviet Union since they had surprised us by putting up Sputnik and then later beat us into orbit with Yuri Gagarin before we could get Alan Shepard into suborbit and then John Glenn into orbit.

Those were exciting times. I will never forget I heard Thom, as we were sitting around one day, saying I am impatient having to sleep because I am so excited about getting up in the morning and going out and doing all these things. Of course, I just listed all those important positions of public service.

Along the way, Thom became a good friend of another Brevard County man, George Barley. Actually, I think George was from Orange County. George was married to Mary. Both of them dedicated their lives to restoration of the Everglades. George and Mary established the Everglades Trust and the Everglades Foundation and then, when George died a very tragic death back in 1995, Thom joined with Mary to make sure George Barley's dream of a restored Everglades became a reality.

Thom was an active member of the Republican Party, but I can tell you that in the friendship between us, partisan membership did not mean anything. We had a personal friendship, and one could often see that as he engaged in public service, but that was especially so when it came to the preservation and the restoration of the Everglades. His success extends, other than his community and country service, to a career in private practice. He was one of the founding partners of Rumberger, Kirk & Caldwell, and under Thom's leadership the firm's modest beginnings were quickly surpassed as it moved to all kinds of new legal successes. Today, that firm includes 75 trial attorneys in 5 offices all across several southern States. Of course, he has been listed as one of Florida's superlawyers every year for the last several years.

Legend has it Thom Rumberger once convinced a Federal judge to allow a real automobile in the courtroom as