

the budget resolution. As a reminder, the budget resolution cannot be filibustered, but there is 50 hours of debate allowed. We must reserve time this week to consider a number of amendments on the budget. After all 50 hours expires, there will be unlimited amendments. So this is going to be a very full week. Senators should expect to work into the night as well as some late votes.

We will stay as long as it takes to complete work on both the continuing resolution and the budget resolution even if that means working on the weekend and into the Easter and Passover recess. I understand that Passover is on Monday, so if we don't finish over the weekend, we would have to come back after Passover, which would be terribly unfortunate, but we need some cooperation from Senators on both sides of the aisle. I am hopeful and confident we can get there.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

Mr. REID. Will the Chair announce the business for the rest of the day.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND FULL-YEAR CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2013

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 933.

The clerk will report the bill by title. The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 933) to make appropriations for the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and other departments and agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2013, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Reid (for Mikulski-Shelby) modified amendment No. 26, in the nature of a substitute.

Toomey amendment No. 115 (to amendment No. 26), to increase by \$60 million the amount appropriated for operation and maintenance for the Department of Defense for programs, projects, and activities in the continental United States, and to provide an offset.

Durbin amendment No. 123 (to amendment No. 115), to change the enactment date.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I note the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. BLUNT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment.

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

Ms. MIKULSKI. I object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate is in a quorum. Without objection, we will suspend the quorum call.

Mr. BLUNT. I need to repeat my request, Madam President, just in case. I ask unanimous consent that we set aside the pending amendment and call up amendment No. 43.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Ms. MIKULSKI. I object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I wish to talk about this amendment. I hope there is still a way I might be able to offer it. If I am not able to offer it as an amendment to this bill, I intend to offer it as a bill to become part of the ongoing laws that govern these kinds of activities. I would also say—and I have said to many people—I have great expectations for the chairman of our committee, Chairman MIKULSKI. I understand she is trying to work out how to make the work of the Senate happen, and I think she is going to be vigilant and determined in leading us back toward the normal appropriations process. I am proud to be a member of her committee, and I do believe she and Senator SHELBY, the ranking Republican, are going to be insisting the Senate get back to the way it should do business. I look forward to working with her to solve the problems we are solving this week and the problems we need to solve before October 1, when the new fiscal year begins.

Let me say a few words about this moment we find ourselves in, and that there is no question that government spending is out of control. We have increased spending 19 percent since 2008. The Federal debt has skyrocketed to almost \$17 trillion now. In 1981, when Ronald Reagan was sworn in as President, as part of his inaugural address we were approaching the first \$1 trillion in debt in the history of the country. The illustration he gave in that speech was: If you had a stack of thousand-dollar bills 4 inches high, you would be a millionaire, but the stack to have \$1 trillion would have to be stacked—those dollar bills—67 miles high. Now we are 67 miles high with thousand-dollar bills, not of dollar bills, and if every 4 inches of that were \$1 million, we are 67 miles high times almost 17. And that is unacceptable.

The President's own budget office has made more than 200 recommendations of ways we could find savings through making government more efficient. More importantly, the Government Accountability Office has identified 51 areas where programs are inefficient, ineffective, and overlapping, leading to billions of dollars in wasted taxpayer money. There is simply no reason the government should stop providing essential services—which is what I want to talk about—because we are cutting 2½ percent of the budget through these line-by-line cuts that, by the way,

wouldn't happen if we would budget at or below the number the law now says is the maximum dollar we can spend in any year—this year or for the next 9 years. This doesn't have to happen at all. But if it does happen, there is no reason we should have to be curtailing essential services.

The Budget Control Act didn't fail to adequately plan for how to protect these essential services. On other days, when the government is not functioning at a full level, there have been many ways found to see those employees got to work. In fact, according to several letters from the Office of Management and Budget, Federal agencies have actually been instructed not to plan for sequestration. A few days ago, I was on the floor with a letter from the Office of Management and Budget from September 28 of last year, 2 days before the new spending year starts, and the letter said: Spend your money as though the law will not be obeyed. Spend your money as though the sequestration law will never go into effect. Spend your money as though the Budget Control Act will be changed.

Of course, now we are halfway into the fiscal year and everybody has been spending as though the law isn't the law and suddenly we have these problems that are much bigger than they would have been if we had dealt with them over 12 months, but now we are trying to deal with them over a handful of months. Furlough notices are being made in a sweeping fashion. They are threatening day-to-day services that protect life and safety.

Every service the Federal Government provides doesn't affect life and safety. I am not saying every Federal job is subject to this amendment or every Federal job is critical for everything that happens every day. I recently sent the Secretary of Agriculture, Secretary Vilsack, a letter urging him to use his authority to minimize the impact of sequestration as it relates to food safety and inspection services, the so-called FSIS. The letter came out right after the USDA said they would be laying off people for as many as 15 days in the last 4 months or so of the spending year—the 4 months that would end at the end of September. It is estimated these food inspector furloughs would lead to the closure of nearly 6,300 facilities across America for the day the food inspectors don't show up.

If you happen to work somewhere for the FDA, the Food and Drug Administration, supervisor, they can show up whenever they want to, and they do that periodically. They can do that as a surprise visit. They can do lots of things. But in the facilities that are supervised by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, that inspector has to be there every day and every minute of every day for those workers in Missouri or Wisconsin or Maryland or anywhere to work.

I have been to a lot of these meat, poultry, and egg facilities, because we

have 146 of them in our State. These are hard jobs. These people are not showing up to work every day because they like to have somewhere to go. The fact is hundreds of workers, in fact, thousands of workers, could not show up for work on a given day and because the USDA inspector doesn't show up, they don't get paid for that day, and their families will suffer needlessly because we couldn't figure out how to prioritize what was necessary for those people to go to work. That is unacceptable to me.

As a result of these furloughs, the estimate is that nearly 500,000 workers will lose \$400 million in wages over the course of this month. When that inspector doesn't show up, or the two inspectors don't show up at that plant that day, none of the many people who work there—and there might be a thousand people working at that plant that day—can work, none of them get paid, none of them produce the food that a few months later or a few weeks later or a few days later won't show up on the grocery store shelves in the country. And that is a problem too, but the problem I am concerned about is the working families who are affected here as well as the working families who later will see their meat, poultry, and egg prices go up because the supply is that much less than it otherwise would have been.

In his response to my letter, Secretary Vilsack claimed that "When Congress drafted the Budget Control Act of 2011 directing Federal agencies to reduce their spending at specified levels, it included no exemption for essential employees such as FSIS inspectors." So today I wish to introduce the amendment the chairman has objected to—and I will introduce in the next few days a piece of legislation exactly like the amendment—and will continue to look for ways to add this amendment to this legislation.

What this amendment would do is give the administration the flexibility it claims it doesn't have. In doing so, this amendment will ensure essential Federal employees continue to provide vital services, such as meat inspectors, control tower operators, and border security guards. And here is how we would do it. In April of 2011, the Office of Personnel Management sent a detailed memo—this is President Obama's Office of Personnel Management—to each Federal agency outlining which Federal employees would be exempted from furlough during a potential government shutdown. It is my belief that the administration may still have this ability. But if they do not have it, I want to give it to them and I want to give it to them exactly as they themselves said it should be applied in April of 2011: Those employees are considered essential "to ensure the safety of life and protection of property," based on language contained in this act.

My amendment would apply identical language used during government shut-

down scenarios to the sequester. It defines an essential employee as an employee that performs work involving the safety of human life and the protection of property as determined by the head of the agency. This is the same language not only used in April of 2011 but used in guidance from the Clinton administration in preparation for the 1995 government shutdown, the last time when the government really did shut down.

These people showed up. These people were told to report to work. And if it was good enough for President Clinton to tell them to report to work, if it was good enough for President Obama in April of 2011 to tell them to report to work, it should be good enough now for the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Transportation and the Secretary of Homeland Security, and anyone else where these people are being furloughed to do so.

This provision provides agencies with funding flexibility so that essential services are maintained, while non-essential employees are furloughed. I think we could do this—and with the chairman's help, we will do this—in the committee, I would hope, without having furloughs necessary in the future. But this amendment would solve the problem of essential employees that both President Clinton and President Obama thought was important to deal with the last two times a similar topic came up.

I would also like to mention the second amendment, which I am not offering, so it doesn't need to be objected to. Senator PRYOR and I have an amendment that may approach this in a different way—at least from the Agriculture, Rural Development, and Food and Drug Administration Subcommittee. He is the chairman and I am the ranking member of that appropriations subcommittee, and I hope we can find a solution here.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCAIN. 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. MCCAIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate on the continuing resolution.

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

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, I come to the floor to discuss the continuing resolution we will vote on perhaps today or tomorrow.

This bill is much more than a continuing resolution and includes five separate appropriations bills. Our country now faces a \$16.6 trillion debt, which is more than \$52,000 for every man, woman, and child in America. It

is time for Congress to go back to the business of voting on and passing annual budget resolutions, authorization bills, and appropriations bills, instead of a huge Omnibus appropriations bill such as the one before us today.

This continuing resolution includes numerous examples of egregious porkbarrel projects as well as billions in spending that was never authorized by the appropriate committee and not requested by the administration. The American taxpayer expects more and deserves more than what we are giving them in this bill.

One unfortunate example of Congress overstepping in this CR is the ongoing inclusion of an appropriations rider that prohibits the Postal Service from moving to 5-day mail delivery. This congressional mandate was put in place in 1984, and it is a roadblock, keeping the Postal Service from transforming the way it delivers mail while still being able to provide universal service. The Postal Service lost \$1.3 billion in the first quarter of this year and recorded a loss of \$15.9 billion in fiscal year 2012. So what are we telling them to do? Business as usual.

With the reality that the Postal Service will continue with devastating and unsustainable losses, the Postmaster General announced last month that the Postal Service would move to 5-day mail delivery later this year, which he estimates will save \$2 billion annually. However, some in Congress who have decided they know better than the leadership of the Postal Service are moving to prohibit the Postal Service from modernizing and transforming the way it does business.

Congress must accept the fact that the Postal Service's current way of doing business is no longer viable. We now correspond by e-mail. We now correspond by different methods. It was terrible when the bridle-and-saddle business went out on the advent of the automobile. Things and times have changed. A huge percentage of the mail delivered today is what we call junk mail advertising. It is no longer the primary way Americans—and people in the world, for that matter—communicate. The American public conducts business in a different way than even 5 years ago. We have to allow the Postal Service to adapt to changing times in order to have a Postal Service in the future, and this includes 5-day mail delivery.

The Postal Service loses \$1.3 billion in the first quarter, \$15.9 billion last year, and do we come up with a fix for it? Do we address the issue? Of course not. There is nothing in this bill that would change that debt. There is nothing in this legislation that fixes the broken Postal Service. But there is a prohibition from them going to 5-day mail delivery which would save \$2 billion. Now, you still have about \$13.9 billion left over, if it is like last year.

So here we are telling the Postal Service they can't go to 5-day delivery, but we have no fix for this problem.

And who picks up the tab? Obviously, eventually it is the American taxpayer. No wonder they view us with certain disdain.

In addition to this rider, the bill includes porkbarrel spending for things such as—and I am not making them up. Here we are with this debt of \$16.6 trillion, and we are going to spend \$65 million for the Pacific Coast salmon restoration for States, including the State of Nevada. I am not making that up, \$65 million for the Pacific Coast salmon restoration, including in Nevada—a program that even President Obama mocked in his 2011 State of the Union Address; \$14.7 million for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Watershed Rehabilitation Program, which the administration has suggested eliminating for years—\$993,000 in grants to dig private wells for private property owners; \$10 billion for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's high energy cost grants programs that go to subsidize electricity bills in two States: Alaska and Hawaii; \$5.9 million for the USDA's economic impact initiative grants.

The economic impact initiative grants have become slush funds for local governments to do such things as rehab an exercise room, renovate a museum on the Pacific Island of Palau, and buy kitchen equipment for city government offices.

Now I would like to talk a bit about defense spending. This is probably the most painful part of my comments, and I will explain why later on.

Defense spending includes over \$6 billion in unrequested or unauthorized funding for programs for the Department of Defense. At a time when the Department of Defense is facing the impact of sequestration, on top of the \$487 billion in cuts directed by the President, we can't afford to spend a single taxpayer dollar on programs that are not a priority for the Defense Department and our national security.

The following things are beginning to happen now that the Department of Defense is under sequestration: The Navy was unable to deploy the USS *Truman*, an aircraft carrier, to the Middle East at a time when the centrifuges in Tehran are spinning; 80 percent of the Army's nondeploying brigades have reduced readiness; Army base operations have been reduced 30 percent; the Navy is reducing flying hours on deployed carriers in the Middle East by 55 percent and shut down all flying for four of the nine carrier air wings. If funding is restored, returning to normal readiness will take 9 to 12 months and cost two to three times as much.

The Air Force is delaying planned acquisition of satellites and aircraft, including JSF and the AC-130J, which will increase the future cost of these systems. And the Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps has said:

By the end of this year, more than 50 percent of my tactical units will be below minimal acceptable levels of readiness for deployment to combat.

My friends, here we are spending money on this kind of junk, on this

kind of pork, while the Commandant of the Marine Corps says by the end of this year more than 50 percent of his combat units will be below minimal acceptable levels of readiness for deployment to combat? In what kind of parallel universe are we residing?

Instead of trying to remedy these drastic reductions to our military strength, the appropriators are willing to overstep the authorizers and defense leadership and provide increased funding for nonessential programs that are clearly not a national security priority. The Armed Services Committee went to great lengths last year to authorize defense spending for the most critical national security requirements as proposed by the President and defense leadership.

Last week I offered an amendment, which was approved by a very narrow margin, that removed funding in the bill for civilian infrastructure—not military infrastructure, mind you, civilian infrastructure—for Guam. This earmark for Guam directly contravened the explicit direction provided by the Armed Services Committee of the Senate and the House of Representatives in the conference report on the fiscal year 2013 National Defense Authorization Act and, in my opinion, is a clear example of abuse of the appropriations process. I say to my colleagues, we are not going to stand for it. I say to my friends on the Appropriations Committee, we will not stand for this.

Funding for the STARBASE Program. This “nice to have but not necessary to have” program will receive \$5 million. According to its Web site, STARBASE focuses on elementary students, primarily fifth graders. The program's goal is to motivate these students to explore science, technology, engineering, and math as they continue their education. Military volunteers apply abstract principles to real-world situations by leading tours and giving lectures on the use of STEM in different settings and careers.

I am sure that is a nice thing to happen. I am sure STARBASE is nice so that fifth graders are able to hear from members in the military. Meanwhile, we can't deploy an aircraft carrier. With a war going on, a budget crisis at our doorstep, this is how we elect to spend our taxpayers' defense money.

Another example is \$11.3 million in increase for the Civil Air Program or CAP. CAP is a volunteer organization that provides aerospace education to young people, runs a junior cadet program, and assists, when possible, by providing emergency services. Its members are hard working. We are grateful for their voluntarism.

This year, as in the past, the Senate Armed Services Committee authorized the President's request for CAP funding. However, CAP is an auxiliary and should not operate to the detriment of the U.S. Air Force. To succeed at their missions, the Air Force must be able to fly and train at locations such as Luke

Air Force Base, which is threatened with reduced flight hours and the closure of two local control towers that could impact air safety around the base. By diverting additional funds—not the primary funding but additional funds—to the Civil Air Patrol from Air Force operations and maintenance accounts which pay for the training and flight operations that keep the Air Force in the sky, we are imposing greater risk on our men and women in uniform.

The bill includes \$154 million for Army, Navy, and Air Force “alternative energy research” initiatives. This type of research has yielded such shining examples as the Department of the Navy's purchase of 450,000 gallons of alternative fuels for \$12 million, which is over \$26 per gallon. Alternative energy research might be necessary, but shouldn't the Department of Energy do it? Why should the Department of Defense do it, when we cannot fly our airplanes?

Section 1822 prohibits the retirement of the C-23 Sherpa aircraft. The Army is currently retiring or divesting the remainder of its fleet of old, limited-duty C-23s, all of which are flown by the Army National Guard. The Army neither wants nor needs these aircraft. The Air Force neither wants nor needs these aircraft. Last year the Congress granted the Army authority to give these planes to any State Governor who wanted them. Guess what. No takers. Now we prevent the Army from retiring these limited-utility aircraft.

Another provision provides \$15 million for an “incentive program” that directs the Department of Defense to overpay on contracts by an additional 5 percent if the contractor is a Native Hawaiian-owned company. If there were ever an example of the special interest pork barrel spending that goes on in this body and infuriates the American people, it is this—\$15 million of Americans' tax dollars is going to any Native Hawaiian-owned company to give them an additional 5 percent if they are a contractor. Here we are, spending all our time trying to eliminate the waste and inefficiency in defense contracting, and we are now spending \$15 million to overpay them if—if they are a Native Hawaiian-owned company.

It will make it easier for the Department of Defense to enter into no-bid contracts for studies, analysis, and unsolicited proposals. The language in the bill makes it ripe for wasteful spending and earmarks for pet projects. For example, the Department of Defense may eliminate competition and use a no-bid contract for a “product of original thinking and was submitted in confidence by one source.” If there were ever an example of how pork barrel and earmark spending begins—“for a product of original thinking and was submitted in confidence by one source.”

Another section requires the Secretary of the Air Force to continue

procuring C-27J Spartan aircraft despite the Air Force's intent to end production and divest these aircraft, and \$24 million to continue development on ACS, which was a canceled Army reconnaissance aircraft program.

Another goody for defense contractors: There is a recurring provision in the bill that allows Alaska Native corporations to circumvent the rules of the Office of Management and Budget that would otherwise require them to follow an open and fair competition process in order to obtain Department of Defense contracts.

The Department of Defense has a history of awarding billions of dollars in large, sole-source, no-bid contracts to Alaska Native corporations abusively. This matter has been well documented by the Senate subcommittee on contracting, the inspectors general of the Department of Defense and the Small Business Administration. The Washington Post ran a series on the Alaska Native corporation contracting. Last year the Government Accountability Office found that the Department of Defense expeditiously awarded two \$500 million, 10-year contracts using this same provision in a past appropriations bill.

Several of us on the Armed Services Committee and the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee have been trying to ensure that contracts to ANCs undergo extra scrutiny. It does not help that this bill is working against the American taxpayer while Congress should be working to make sure the Department of Defense acquires what it truly needs as economically as possible through competition.

There is \$48 million in funding for the Defense Department to do research dealing with Parkinson's disease, neurofibromatosis, and HIV/AIDS research. This research is important. It has no place in a Department of Defense bill. It should be funded by the National Institutes of Health, not the Department of Defense.

I ask unanimous consent to have a long list of unspecified and unauthorized and unnecessary and wasteful pork printed in the RECORD.

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

Additional DoD funding above the requested and authorized levels include:

\$18 million for unspecified "industrial preparedness"

\$567 million for "unrequested" medical research

\$9 million for unspecified radar research

\$48 million for computing research

\$20 million for university research initiatives

\$45 million for IMPACT AID to civilian elementary and secondary schools

\$139 million for CH-47 helicopter procurement and modifications

\$110 million to modify National Guard UH-60 helicopters

\$199 million for new National Guard UH-60 helicopters

\$300 million for new Patriot Missile systems

\$100 million for National Guard Humvees

\$66 million for laser range finders

\$605 million to procure 11 additional F-18 aircraft

\$79 million for a Navy Reserve C-40 aircraft—the military version of a Boeing 737

\$130 million for two KC-130J aircraft

\$55 million for one C-130J aircraft (amount)

\$126 million for two HC-130J aircraft

\$126 million for two MC-130J aircraft

\$107 million for RQ-4 unmanned aerial vehicles

\$62 million for Air National Guard F-15 aircraft radar upgrades

\$189 million for 17 additional SM-3 missiles

\$7 million for Civil Air Patrol program increase

\$27 million for Army, Navy, and Air Force nanotechnology research

\$26 million for materials research

\$71 million for one additional V-22 Osprey aircraft

\$80 million for additional Marine UH-1Y and AH-1Z Cobra helicopters

\$20 million for upgrades to SH-60 Sea Hawk helicopters

\$15 million for "weapons and munitions technology"

\$20 million for "electronics and electronic devices"

\$13 million for ordnance research

\$13 million for military clothing technology

\$39 million for Army, Navy and Air Force battery research

\$19 million for "missile and rocket technology"

\$20 million for university research initiatives

\$9 million for unspecified radar research

\$32 million for a bone marrow registry program

\$7 million for a "tactical athlete program"

\$10 million in small business giveaways as part of the Littoral Combat Ship program

\$15 million in small business giveaways as part of the Virginia class submarine program

\$15 million in small business giveaways as part of the Multi-Mission Maritime Aircraft program

\$10 million in small business giveaways as part of the MK-48 torpedo program

\$80 million for the Space Based Infrared System satellite program

\$9 million for directed energy technology

\$20 million for the Air Force's manufacturing technology program

\$105 million for the Operationally Responsive Space program

\$25 million for the Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle Program

\$35 million for the Space Test Program

\$20 million to research "anti-tamper technology"

\$20 million for the Air Force to research coal-to-liquid fuel.

\$8 million to modify Navy Close-In Weapons Systems

\$778 million for advance procurement funding for one Virginia class submarine

\$1 billion for one additional Arleigh Burke class destroyer

\$263 million for advance procurement of one Amphibious Transport Dock ship

\$13 million for submarine research and technology

\$40 million for shipyard capital investments

Mr. MCCAIN. It is disgraceful. I see that my colleague from Texas is waiting to talk. This is absolutely unbelievable. All of this long list of billions of dollars of spending can only be considered as how obscene it is by listening to what the impacts of sequester have already been on the men and women in the military.

Sequester so far canceled four brigade exercises of training of the Army—that has been canceled. It reduces the base operations, the normal day-to-day operations of the base, by 30 percent; cancels half a year of helicopter and ground vehicle depot maintenance; stops postwar repair of 1,300 vehicles and 17,000 weapons. It reduces the readiness of the Army's non-deploying brigades and stops tuition assistance for all Active-Duty and Reserve men and women in the Army.

In the Navy, it cancels several submarine deployments; reduces flying hours on deployed carriers in the Middle East by 55 percent—and believe me, my friends, unless they are able to operate and train, they are not safe and they are not capable. It reduces the western Pacific deployed operations by 35 percent; nondeployed Pacific ships lose 40 percent of their steaming days; reduces Middle East, Atlantic, and Mediterranean ballistic missile defense patrols. It shuts down all flying of four of our nine carrier air wings—that has been shut down 9 to 12 months. It will take 9 to 12 months to restore normal readiness at two to three times the cost. It cuts all major exercises that are going on and defers emergent repairs; the USS *Truman* deployment to the Middle East delayed indefinitely; the Eisenhower carrier deployment extended indefinitely; the USS *Nimitz* and *Bush* carrier strike force will not be ready for scheduled 2013 deployments.

The Air Force—likely to prevent the Air Force's ability to achieve the 2017 goal of being fully auditable; over 420 projects at 140 installations across the Air Force are canceled; affects runway repairs and critical sustainment projects; delays planned acquisition of satellites and aircraft; reduces flying hours for cargo, fighter, and bomber aircraft.

In the Marine Corps, the Marine Corps is unable to complete the rebalancing of Marine Corps forces to the Asia Pacific region. It will cause 55 percent of the U.S. Marine Corps aviation squad to fall below ready-to-deploy status. Over half of the aviation squadrons in the U.S. Marine Corps are not ready to deploy. The U.S. Marine Corps will not be able to accomplish planned reset of equipment returning from overseas. Depot-level maintenance will be reduced, delaying reset ability by 18 months and reducing readiness of non-deployed forces. Facilities will be funded at 71 percent of the requirement.

Most important—maybe Members of Congress do not have a lot of credibility. Maybe that is understandable. I will leave that up to the American people to judge. I do think we respect the Commandant of the Marine Corps and what he had to say. I repeat:

By the end of this year, more than 50 percent of my combat units will be below minimum acceptable levels of readiness for deployment to combat.

Over the weekend, there was a gathering in our Nation's Washington, DC, area of a group of our conservative

Americans and members of the Republican Party, and references were made to people who were too old and moss-covered, that we need new and fresh individuals and ideas and thoughts. I agree with all of those—every bit of those recommendations and comments that were made.

But there is a little bit of benefit of having been around for a while. My friends, I will tell you right now, I have seen this movie before. I saw it after the Vietnam war. When the Vietnam war was over, Americans were war-weary. We had been driven apart in a way that was almost unprecedented in our history—certainly maybe as far back as our Civil War. America was torn apart.

The first casualty of that was our military. Our military was cut and cut and cut, to the point where, in 1979, I believe it was, the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army came before Congress and testified. It was kind of a seminal moment. He told the Congress and the American people that we had a “hollow Army” that would be unable to defend this Nation adequately.

It also happened to coincide with when a group of brave Americans were being held hostage in the Embassy in Tehran, made famous by a fantastic movie called “Argo.” Along came a guy named Ronald Reagan who promised that we would restore our military, that we would restore our capability, that we would make America the leader in the world again, and a simple phrase called “peace through strength.”

I want to tell you what we are doing with this sequestration. What we are doing with this sequestration is an exact replay of what we did after the Vietnam war. I understand that the American people are war-weary. I understand that there are savings that can be made—large savings made in our defense spending. But to do it like this puts the security of this Nation in jeopardy.

We are blessed with the finest military ever in our history. I say that with great respect to my predecessors who fought in previous wars. Our All-Volunteer Force is the best this Nation has ever produced. It is the best of America. We all know that. Do you know what is happening to them right now? I will tell you what is happening to them right now because I talk to them all the time. They don't know where their next deployment is going to be. They don't know if they are going to be adequately trained to defend this Nation. They have lost confidence—they have lost confidence in the leadership of this Nation. And the good ones, the really good ones, are getting out. They are not going to stay in a military in which they believe there is no future and they are unable to defend this Nation. I tell my colleagues that. Ask anyone in the military today—junior officer, senior officer, senior enlisted person—and they will tell you they are disgusted with what is going on.

The least we can do is give them the ability to train and to operate to defend this Nation. This sequester and this legislation we are considering is a direct contradiction to everything we have said and promised them that we would do for them when they agreed as a volunteer to serve this Nation. It is a shameful period in the history of this Congress, the Presidency, and the way we have gone about this business. We will maybe—very likely—pay a very heavy price.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, President Obama recently told the Speaker of the House of Representatives that we do not have a spending problem. Last week he told ABC News that we do not have an immediate crisis in terms of the debt. These comments indicate that the President just does not seem to understand the negative impact of \$16.5 trillion in debt on our economy.

For that matter, based on the new budget, Senate Democrats do not seem to get it either. Not only would the budget that was passed out of the Senate Budget Committee last week raise taxes by an additional \$1.5 trillion, it would also increase Federal spending by roughly 60 percent and increase our national debt by \$7.3 trillion.

I should say that as bad as it is, the budget that was passed out of the Budget Committee last week represents progress. How could I possibly say that? Because it has been 1,419 days since the Senate has passed a budget under Democratic control. So I guess we could say actually passing a budget out of the Budget Committee and having the budget come to the floor this week represents progress.

The reason I said Democrats have raised taxes again—or proposed an additional revenue increase in this budget—is because they already did so previously by \$1 trillion with the passage of ObamaCare. In my experience, ObamaCare is unique compared to other legislation we have passed here. We passed it in 2009 and early 2010. Many of its provisions have yet to even kick in, and some of the provisions—including the tax increases—will not kick in until 2014. As I said, it will raise taxes by an additional \$1 trillion.

Earlier this year—we know as a result of the fiscal-cliff vote at the end of December—there was an additional \$620 billion tax increase at that time, but apparently that was not enough. There is an important lesson here. For those who believe that bigger and more government is the answer to every problem that confronts our country, more taxes is never enough. In fact, the Leviathan is insatiable.

This debate comes down to a basic philosophy in how we should govern ourselves as a free people. Our friends on the other side of the aisle seem to be focused incessantly on the government and growing the government in the hope that if the Federal Govern-

ment spends enough money—even if the money is borrowed from our creditors—some of that might trickle down into the private sector economy. Meanwhile, this side of the aisle fundamentally believes it is the job creation in the private sector which helps grow the economy and creates opportunity and prosperity. We look for ways to rein in wasteful Washington spending to a more sustainable level so it stops hampering private sector investment and job creation.

I wish to ask President Obama: If we don't have a spending problem, why is it we have accumulated more than \$6 trillion in additional debt since you took office about 4 years ago? If we don't have a spending problem, why is it we still have \$100 trillion in unfunded liabilities because of programs that literally are not funded into the future? Why is it that today we are spending more than \$200 billion a year on interest payments on the debt? We cannot borrow \$16.5 trillion interest free. Even at the low interest rates we have today, we are paying \$200 billion a year on interest on that debt.

Is the President arguing we should postpone measured spending cuts and measured entitlement reforms until we have experienced a full-blown European-style meltdown? I hope not. I don't think so because that would be grossly irresponsible. I will remind the President and his allies that after \$4 trillion in deficits—that would be the annual difference between what we bring in and what the government spends. After four times in a row of deficits that are more than \$1 trillion, after more than \$1.6 trillion in tax increases, after hundreds of billions of dollars worth of new regulations, our country is mired; we are mired in the longest period of high unemployment since the Great Depression. That is a direct consequence of this huge debt and our creditors' lack of confidence that we are actually serious about dealing with it.

Indeed, many workers have simply given up on finding work, which is one reason why our labor force participation rate is now at a 32-year low. Unemployment is almost 8 percent, but that doesn't take into account the millions of people who have simply given up looking for work after a long period of unemployment.

Since June 2009 when the recession officially ended, median household income has fallen by more than \$2,400. So instead of treading water, the average American family is seeing their buying power decrease by more than \$2,400 since 2009. At the same time they are finding that not only are their taxes going up with the return of the payroll tax to its previous level, but they are finding their costs for gasoline, food, and the other necessities of life are going up. Does this sound like an economy that can stand another massive tax increase? I don't think so.

President Obama said to ABC News that we should not try to balance the

budget “just for the sake of balance.” Well, once again, the President was knocking down a straw man. We weren’t talking about doing something symbolic; we were talking about doing something real, something that would benefit the economy and job growth and getting people back to work instead of dependency, which I know none of them want. We see more and more people on food stamps, more people receiving disability benefits, and more people on unemployment. These are people who would like to get back to work and regain their sense of dignity and self-sufficiency, but because the economy is growing so slowly, they cannot do that. We believe that balancing the budget and reducing our debt burden is absolutely essential to long-term economic growth—long-term economic growth—which creates more jobs, more taxpayers, and people who are actually putting money into the Treasury to help us balance our deficits.

We also believe that balancing the budget and reducing our debt burden is essential to saving important programs our seniors depend upon, such as Medicare and Social Security. If we want to remain an opportunity society with high levels of upward mobility—something we call the American dream—we must act sooner rather than later. The longer we delay, the more expensive and the more difficult the challenge of fixing these problems will become. Again, the basic question is: Are we more concerned with growing the job-creating private sector or with growing the Federal Government?

The budget that passed out of the Senate Budget Committee—along a party-line vote with strictly the votes of Democrats—last week makes it clear they are ultimately more concerned with growing the Federal Government. We will have a chance on the floor of the Senate this week for Democrats and Republicans alike to offer amendments and get votes, which I think will provide a lot of clarity to the contrasting approaches of the major political parties.

We have simply had the weakest economic recovery since the Great Depression, and so it is now time to do something different. I cannot recall who the original author was of the saying that the definition of insanity is to do the same thing over and over again and to expect different outcomes. Well, if that is the definition of insanity, that is what is happening here in the U.S. Congress. It is time to put economic growth ahead of government growth.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

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

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

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I want to bring my colleagues up to date on where we are. Right now the vice chairman of the committee, Senator SHELBY, and I are in conversation on some possible agreements we could make on the outstanding amendments so we can get them down to a manageable list. We are waiting for his arrival. He was at the airport, and we have been in communication. Our conversations have been constructive. When Senator SHELBY arrives, we look forward to perhaps presenting something to the Senate that will give us a clear path on specific amendments.

While we are waiting for that, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business about some very sad events that occurred in Maryland.

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

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, over the weekend, we in Maryland were saddened by three separate yet poignant deaths.

CPT Sara Cullen, one of our very own—a wonderful woman who served in the U.S. military—died in Afghanistan. Kristina Quigley, a young woman who showed enormous promise, was killed in an awful bus crash. She was the lacrosse coach at Seton Hill. Also, someone beloved to so many of us, Larry Simns, was the head of the watermen’s association. For those who are from different parts of the country, they are called fishermen’s associations. For people who enjoy Maryland crabs and oysters, they are harvested by the men who sail the Chesapeake Bay in open waters. The head of their association was Larry Simns.

I wish to talk briefly about all three.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORECES

CAPTAIN SARA KNUSTON CULLEN

Captain Cullen died on March 11 from a crash in a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter in the Kandahar Province in Afghanistan. It was during a training mission in a very heavy rain. She was assigned to headquarters and the combat aviation brigade. She was a wonderful woman with enormous promise. She was a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy. She graduated from West Point in 2007, and she got married very recently to another pilot, Chris Cullen.

I want to comment that we in Maryland mourn the loss of Captain Cullen. She was well known and well regarded here locally in Carroll County. She went to a school called Liberty High School. Isn’t that a great name? She wanted to go to West Point. She was not nominated by me but by another member of the Maryland delegation. We try to share that responsibility in order to maximize our talent. I know the gentlelady from Hawaii does that as well. We have so much talent in Maryland, we don’t want to waste one nomination, so we all work together.

By all accounts, Captain Cullen was on her way to being an outstanding officer with a deep commitment to her

country. Friends and family of hers in Eldersburg, a community in Carroll County where she grew up, said she was dearly loved.

“She was always looking for the next adventure, the next challenge, and the next task to being a better person,” said her best friend Katie Owens.

NATO told us of the crash last week, and I was mortified about this over the weekend. On behalf of all of Maryland, we want to extend our condolences to her husband, to her family, and to her parents, who obviously gave her a great home and saw to her education. It is a sad day when we lose somebody in Afghanistan, and it is a very sad day for those of us in Maryland.

REMEMBERING KRISTINA QUIGLEY

We also remember another wonderful woman by the name of Kristina Quigley. Kristina Quigley grew up in a community called Dundalk. Dundalk is a blue-collar suburb outside Baltimore City. She went to Dundalk High School and then to Duquesne and then, because she was a great athlete, she went on to a sports career in college at Duquesne and then fulfilled a dream of hers to be a coach.

On a road trip of the college women’s lacrosse team, there was a terrible accident on the Pennsylvania Turnpike. The bus went off the road and she was, obviously, sitting in a place where she received one of the first impacts. She was only 30 years old. She was married with a young child. She was 6 months pregnant at the time of the accident. Her unborn child perished as well.

This is very sad. There were many who were injured on this bus. Several were from Maryland who were also members of the team, and the assistant coach is also from Maryland. The assistant coach is from Baltimore. There were 23 students on board when this happened in Cumberland County. We are now awaiting details. We are now awaiting the investigation. But it is a very sad day when this promising young woman with the world ahead of her who, by all accounts, was not only an athlete who could teach athletics, but she was an inspirational leader. Girls and young women just loved her. Lacrosse is a tough sport to play. They were on their way to a great game. Seton Hill is a great Catholic college. There was excitement on the bus, anticipation, and we are sorry about this terrible tragedy.

Again, we extend our heartfelt condolences to her parents who live in Baltimore and to her husband who lives on the Seton Hill campus.

REMEMBERING LARRY SIMNS

In addition, because each one has a story, is my own pal and good friend Larry Simns. Larry Simns was a great Marylander. His official name was Lawrence Simns, Sr., and he passed away Thursday. He fathered three children. He had 5 stepchildren, 12 grandchildren, and 3 great-grandchildren. He was a friend to a host of people up and down the Chesapeake Bay. If you were involved in cleaning up the bay or

making sure the people who live alongside the bay had jobs, you knew Larry Simns. He was a true champion. For me, he was a wonderful adviser on how we could clean up the bay but ensure that our watermen could continue to work on the bay.

We have been plagued over the last several years with the declining of our species, including our crabs and our oysters. If we want to save them, it means rules and regulations. If my colleagues know our watermen, they know they are kind of like the Wild West guys who want to ride the range. They don't like rules and regulations. They are not rules and regulations kind of guys, but they also know we have to be able to save the species.

For decades Larry himself saw the bay's declining health: poor water quality, fewer fish and crabs, barren oyster reefs. Then he worked with me to help the watermen navigate through these tough environmental factors, tough economies, and stiff regulations. He did not have an easy job, but he approached it with such tenacity, such persistence, and in such a way where he spoke with humility about what God had given us, this spectacular Chesapeake Bay, and how we had to preserve it and the jobs. He became an unlikely spokesman because, he said: I am not much for words; you know me. We did know him and he spoke eloquently for these men and women.

I worked very hard with the watermen on how we could help them clean up the bay, along with Senator CARDIN and the Members of the House delegation, and worked with our watermen and worked with our scientists studying the bay so we could make sure we could preserve the livelihoods and heritage of the bay and the men who work on it. Fortunately, working together, we were able to do many wonderful things. But we could only do it because Larry Simns was such a great advocate.

We are going to miss him. I just can't believe Larry will not be with us anymore. When I first came to the Senate—now over 20-some years ago—Larry was one of the first to reach out to me, to help me learn the ways of the watermen, learn what they were up against, including tough weather, harsh working conditions, escalating fuel prices, because our men and women go out on those waters using boats that consume diesel oil, and, again, the declining species. But working together, we were able to accomplish a lot.

So I wish to say to his family: Thank you for lending Larry to us, because he spent much time in government meetings, regulatory hearings, sitting with me at Fisherman's Inn or pulling the watermen together for a roundtable so we could talk things over to find a sensible center to preserve their jobs and still have the smart science and smart regulations. We want to thank Larry for all the time he put in, taking a very green Senator—and by green I don't

mean only in the environmental sense but as a new Senator—and helping me learn the ways of the people because we want to preserve their way of life.

It is a sad day. It is a sad day for all of us. So when Memorial Day comes and the restaurants open and piles of Maryland crabs start coming in and the restaurants start serving the steamed crabs and so on, I just want to say this: Larry, wherever you are, whenever I pound the crab claw, I will be thinking of you and all you meant in terms of what we did to be able to create jobs, clean up the environment, and be able to keep our way of life going on the Chesapeake Bay.

The PRESIDING OFFICER can see we had three great Marylanders, each doing a very different thing. But what I am so proud of with Captain Cullen, Larry Simns, and Kristina Quigley is that each in their own way was trying to make a difference, one to protect America, the other to protect jobs and a way of life on the Chesapeake Bay, and the other to inspire young women not only to be ready for the playing fields of lacrosse but for the playing fields of life. All three in their own way were inspirational leaders. All three in their own way made a difference in the lives of the people I came in contact with. I wish to say God bless them and God treat them kindly and may their souls rest in peace.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. REID. I ask there be order in the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will come to order.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I am going to propound a unanimous consent request. Everyone has to look at this from way up high and understand how much has been accomplished during the last week. Senator MIKULSKI and Senator SHELBY have worked very hard to change the bill that came from the House of Representatives, and they have done a good job, a really good job. People have requested further changes to the bill, and we have tried hard. I say "we," I have gone to Senator MCCONNELL many times, Senator MIKULSKI, Senator SHELBY, and others trying to come up with some way to move forward on this legislation.

There is a big spotlight on the Senate to see if we can do something. Whatever we come up with, what MIKULSKI and SHELBY, what they have come up with, it is not perfect. I could improve it. The Senator from Tennessee could improve it. Anyone in this body could improve what they did, but they did the best they could—and it was hard.

Both of these Senators gave up things that help them in their States.

They worked together on Commerce-State-Justice for many years. They know that subcommittee better than anyone has ever known that subcommittee. They both have many issues within their States that are affected by that subcommittee, but they gave that up for the greater good.

I am asking Senators here to give up a few things for the greater good, to try to allow us to get this done. The reason this is important is it will allow us to go forward and start having appropriations bills. We changed the rules at the beginning of the year to make it easier to go to certain bills, and what we had in mind was appropriations bills.

It has been hard to come up with this. I repeat, is it really, really good? No, probably not. But it is not bad.

I hope we could approve this unanimous consent request. We would have nine votes on matters that people believe are really important. There are other people who have things that are just as important, but this is legislation, the art of compromise.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the two cloture motions be withdrawn; that the following amendments be in order to the Mikulski-Shelby substitute: Coburn No. 69, Coburn No. 93, Coburn No. 65 as modified with the changes that are at the desk, Coburn No. 70 as modified with the changes that are at the desk, Inhofe No. 72 as modified with changes that are at the desk, Grassley No. 76 as modified with changes that are at the desk, Mikulski-Shelby No. 98, Leahy No. 129 as modified with changes that are at the desk, and Pryor-Blunt No. 82; that no other first-degree amendments to the substitute or the underlying bill be in order and no second-degree amendments be in order to any of the amendments listed above prior to the vote; that there be 30 minutes equally divided between the two leaders or their designees prior to votes in relation to the amendments in the order listed; and that upon the disposition of Leahy No. 29 as modified, the Durbin second-degree amendment to Toomey amendment No. 115 be withdrawn; that all the amendments be subject to a 60-affirmative-vote threshold; that the Senate proceed to vote in relation to the Toomey amendment No. 115; that upon disposition of the Toomey amendment, the Senate proceed to vote on the Mikulski-Shelby substitute amendment, as amended; that if the substitute amendment, as amended, is agreed to, the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the bill, as amended.

It is my understanding that the Toomey amendment has a point of order against it; is that right? I make that request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection? The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. AYOTTE. Madam President, I reserve the right to object. I have filed an amendment. I filed it last week. It

is a reasonable amendment that both sides have been aware of. It is one that is also germane. It is to strike funding, \$380 million in funding from the continuing resolution for a missile defense program that will never protect a single warfighter. It is a medium extended air defense system. In fact, it has been called a missile to nowhere, and my amendment would transfer those funds to operation and maintenance so they could be used for our warfighters, particularly as sequestration is pending, for real purposes instead of a program we will never realize anything from, that would protect our warfighters. I reserve the right to object.

Mrs. BOXER. Do you object?

Mr. REID. The Senator has not objected; is that right?

Ms. AYOTTE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. Madam President, this is over with. There has been objection. I regret the Senator has objected to this reasonable request. It really is reasonable. I understand how strongly the Senator from New Hampshire feels about the issue. I am aware of the issue. I understand it very well. I have talked to a number of Senators. I can't get them to agree to this. They may be wrong, she may be right. She may be wrong, they may be right. I cannot make that decision. I cannot go forward if somebody doesn't agree to this.

Putting together a unanimous consent agreement like this, as I indicated, certainly has not been easy. The people I have empathy for are these two Senators here. They are veteran legislators. They have dedicated a large part of the last 2 weeks to this legislation.

We could have an alternative. We could just vote for what the House sent us. All the work they have done—down the drain. There are scores of Senators—and I say that plural—scores of the 100 Senators who have benefited from the work they have done. It has helped them in their States. It has rearranged things. What they have done does not spend any more money. We are spending the same amount of money the House did. But the House was very emphatic that they would not allow flexibility on nondefense matters. They have some control over what we do.

I just think it is such a shame that there is an objection preventing the Senate from being able to consider these amendments. There are nine amendments. This is a must-pass measure so we will need to move this Senate bill through the Senate back to the House to avoid the government shutdown. I think it is a shame, but that is where we are.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Maryland, Ms. MIKULSKI, be recognized for up to 5 minutes, and the Senator from Alabama be recognized for up to 5 minutes prior to the vote on cloture.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, had the Senator from New Hampshire not objected to the previous request for unanimous consent, I would have objected. I want to use this moment just to point out that an amendment that is, in my view, so critical to the air safety of our country, the traveling public's ability to feel secure and safe in their travel, was not included in the request for unanimous consent. This is an amendment that would transfer money to allow the air traffic control tower program to continue.

While the majority leader has requested that there be magnanimity, that there be reasonableness, in my view, in the absence of this amendment being included, come April 7 those air traffic control towers are closed. And even I, as a member of the Appropriations Committee, will have no ability to reverse course once they are closed. So this program faces an immediate deadline.

Had the Senator from New Hampshire not objected previously to the unanimous consent request, I would have on that basis. I have no objection to the request that time be given to the chair and the ranking member of the committee.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, my consent has been agreed to. In response to my friend from Kansas, everyone can give a heart-rending speech. We have tens of thousands of children who will not be able to go to Head Start. I think that is pretty compelling. There are many other people in this body who could give a tearjerker—just like the Senator tried to do.

This is about compromise. We are trying to work through this so we can continue to fund the government and set up a pattern in this Congress so we can have appropriation bills for 2014.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DONNELLY). Is there objection to the request?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise to ask all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote for cloture on the Senate bill. I want to say to my colleagues, we have come very far on this bill, and as of Thursday we had 126 amendments. I love the Senate. We love to talk, and we love to amend. Everyone has, in many instances, outstanding ideas to improve the bill. We are now at the point where we have dueling amendments. We have matters of policy to discuss, but we are now at the point where the bill must come to a close, and that is why we proposed this limited number of amendments. Some of my colleagues have amendments on the issue related to flexibility.

If I could ask the Senator from Kansas a question, it is not that we dispute what the Air Force is going to face or

what our poultry farmers are going to face. Both sides of the aisle—whether it is BLUNT of Missouri, ISAKSON of Georgia, PRYOR or BOOZMAN of Arkansas, or MIKULSKI and CARDIN of Maryland, chicken is the mainstay of our eastern shore. We are all facing this.

In my original underlying bill, I had a 1-percent transfer authority subject to the approval of Congress that would have solved all of these problems. It was the other Chamber—and even those on the other side of the aisle—that insisted I remove that from this bill. For all of those who wanted flexibility, I wanted to fix it. We could not fix it. Believe me, I wanted to fix it. Each and every one of these individual amendments has merit in and of itself.

We are now at the point where we have to decide whether we want the Senate bill to stand and be voted on with further amendments subject to the Parliamentarian determining what is germane and therefore eligible for consideration or do we want the House bill? It is as simple as that.

We have come so far. I want to thank the vice chairman, Senator SHELBY, his staff, and all the clerks on the other side of the aisle for working so assiduously.

We have to decide: Do we want to make the perfect the enemy of the good? Do we want to have a bill that substantially improves the House bill? It does not accomplish every objective we want, but, in fact, does do several things.

No. 1, it would avoid a government shutdown. Say what, Senator MIKULSKI? Avoid a government shutdown? We could show that we could actually govern and that we could actually pass a bill that I believe the House will accept as well. Hallelujah. That in and of itself would be a major accomplishment. We would have taken the House bill and we would have made substantial improvements that I think both sides of the aisle agree are important. We could get that done. The question is: Can both sides of this Chamber take yes for an answer? If we take yes for an answer, again, we avoid a government shutdown. We will show we can govern and make substantial improvements not only in the areas of defense and national security, but in other areas where people protect us, such as border control and food safety. Do we get what we want? No. But we do get a bill that we can feel has made a major accomplishment.

I could go through this item by item. I have a speech that would take me 20 minutes to go through. I am not going to go through it. What I am going to say to my colleagues is: Both sides of the aisle have worked together for the common good in such areas as the security of our country, meeting compelling human needs, and investments in research and technology. I think we ought to say yes and vote to move to cloture on the Senate bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, to some extent, I want to repeat what Senator MIKULSKI just said. No. 1, this would avoid a government shutdown. That should appeal to everybody. I think it appeals to the American people. It should appeal to everybody in this body tonight.

No. 2, it enforces the Budget Control Act and sequester levels. I will say it again. It enforces the Budget Control Act and sequester levels. Granted, perhaps not everything is ideal, but what is here? There will be ample time to address some of the issues. Some of the issues that have been raised are bona fide issues that we were unable to address for one reason or another in this process. But I assure my colleagues—and I have been working with my colleagues and with Senator MIKULSKI's Democratic colleagues—that if we do not move forward, I am afraid there may be no future appropriations bills, which is not good for anyone in this legislative process.

We have lurched from crisis to crisis. The CR is running out. What we are asking to do is to fund the government until September 30.

I urge my colleagues to support cloture and move this process forward.

I thank the Chair.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I want to follow up.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. To be clear, the first vote is on the cloture for the Senate bill. If this vote on cloture fails, we will go to the House bill. We have two choices tonight; we have two paths which we can go down. We can go down the Senate path, which is bipartisan in its approach. It is a good and solid bill, but if it goes down, we will immediately go to cloture on the House bill. If that passes, then essentially everything that we as U.S. Senators have worked on will be rubberstamping what the House sent us. So the path and choice are ours.

I intend to vote aye on the Senate bill and I urge all of my colleagues on this side of the aisle to follow my lead. I know Senator Shelby feels the same about it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report—

Mr. MORAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. No further debate is in order.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule

XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the Mikulski-Shelby substitute amendment No. 26, as modified, to H.R. 933 a bill making appropriations for the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and other departments and agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2013, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Barbara A. Mikulski, Sherrod Brown, Barbara Boxer, Robert Menendez, Patty Murray, Amy Klobuchar, Debbie Stabenow, Max Baucus, Tim Johnson, Benjamin L. Cardin, John D. Rockefeller IV, Charles E. Schumer, Carl Levin, Thomas R. Carper, Richard J. Durbin, Maria Cantwell

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the Mikulski-Shelby substitute amendment No. 26, as modified, offered by the Senator from Nevada, Mr. REID, to H.R. 933, making appropriations for the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and other departments and agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2013, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this is an amendment offered by Reid on behalf of Senators Shelby and Mikulski.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 63, nays 35, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 38 Leg.]

YEAS—63

Alexander	Franken	Mikulski
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Baucus	Hagan	Murphy
Begich	Harkin	Murray
Bennet	Heinrich	Nelson
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Pryor
Blunt	Hirono	Reed
Boozman	Hoeven	Reid
Boxer	Isakson	Rockefeller
Brown	Johanns	Sanders
Cantwell	Johnson (SD)	Schatz
Cardin	Kaine	Schumer
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Klobuchar	Shelby
Cochran	Landrieu	Stabenow
Collins	Leahy	Udall (CO)
Cooms	Levin	Udall (NM)
Cowan	Manchin	Warner
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warren
Durbin	Menendez	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Merkley	Wyden

NAYS—35

Ayotte	Coats	Crapo
Barrasso	Coburn	Cruz
Burr	Corker	Enzi
Chambliss	Cornyn	Fischer

Flake	McCain	Scott
Grassley	McConnell	Sessions
Hatch	Moran	Tester
Heller	Paul	Thune
Inhofe	Portman	Toomey
Johnson (WI)	Risch	Vitter
Kirk	Roberts	Wicker
Lee	Rubio	

NOT VOTING—2

Graham	Lautenberg
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 63, the nays are 35. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes and that following my remarks Senator MORAN be granted up to 10 minutes and then Senator BOXER be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED STATES-LED INVASION OF IRAQ

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, this month we mark the 10th anniversary of the United States-led invasion of Iraq. With more veterans per capita than nearly any other State, Montanans proudly answer when duty calls.

The Book of John, chapter 15, verse 13 says: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

On this anniversary, we remember the Montanans and all Americans who laid down their lives in the name of freedom.

On my family ranch near Wolf Creek, MT, there is a willow tree that sways in the wind and stretches in the Sun.

On July 29, 2006, my nephew, Marine Cpl Phillip Baucus, was killed during combat operations in Iraq's Al Anbar Province. He was just 28 years old.

He was laid to rest on the same mountain where my father lies, the same ranch where he had married his lovely Katharine less than 1 year earlier.

Phillip was a bright and dedicated young man. He was like a son to me.

My brother John and I planted that willow tree on the ranch in memory of Phillip. We also planted a pine tree nearby.

I am not the only Montanan who has grieved. Forty Montanans have lost their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan. We grieve for them all. We miss them all.

We must honor their courage by living up to the ideals they died to defend. We must also honor their sacrifice by supporting the troops who come home forever changed. Thousands come home with traumatic brain injuries, post-traumatic stress disorder, and other injuries.

Make no mistake, we have taken important steps to see that veterans receive the care they need when they come home. We have worked for a strong post-9/11 GI bill to ensure thousands of veterans can go to college. We also fought to make sure the VA is fairly and adequately supporting our

student veterans. Yet it remains a disgrace that unemployment rates among veterans exceed that of nonveterans.

In Montana, unemployment among Iraq and Afghanistan veterans stands at 17.5 percent. That is the fourth highest rate in the country.

Since the Iraq war began, I have hired veterans to help draft policies that honor the sacrifices of our military. My staff has worked with me to draft the original tax credit for businesses that hire veterans. I am very honored to see that has been adopted by this Congress and by the President.

We spearheaded efforts to improve mental health screenings for all branches of the military based on Montana's strong model for catching the warning signs of PTSD. We started that in Montana. It is now incorporated as national defense policy.

In the last 10 years, our Nation has also been fighting terrorists in Afghanistan. As we reflect on the costs of the war in Iraq, we know that now is the time for Afghans to take responsibility for their own country.

In 2013, \$97 billion will go to the war in Afghanistan alone. Do you know that the money that is being spent in both Iraq and Afghanistan is enough to double the number of public elementary schools in the United States and rebuild the American Interstate Highway System five times over? Dollars spent daily in Afghanistan need to be spent on nation building here at home.

While I am proud that we are closer than ever to bringing all of our troops home, it is not enough to just bring them back. We need to and can be doing a better job making sure our troops are ready to compete and win on the homefront. That means making sure that the day they are discharged from the service, they can transfer skills earned from the military into the civilian workforce.

My first order of business this year was to declare war on veterans unemployment. Troops who are trained to do a job in the military should get civilian credentials at the same time. They should not have to get recredentialed and retrained when they get home. If they got credentialed in the military, that should be sufficient for driving trucks, et cetera. The effort is already underway for EMTs and truckdrivers, but my VETs Act goes even further to cover military police, firefighters, and air traffic controllers. In 2011, 1,000 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans were unemployed in Montana, 240,000 unemployed nationwide. With 34,000 troops scheduled to come home from Afghanistan next year, the time to get serious about tackling veterans unemployment is now.

We will never forget the Montanans we have lost in combat in the Mideast over the last 10 years. They had big dreams. They looked forward to long, happy lives. They were volunteers. They were sons and daughters. They had children. They had dear friends. They grew up in small towns, such as

Fairfield, Sand Springs, Philipsburg, and Wolf Creek. We hear their voices at Little League games, in the babbling creeks of Montana, in the rustling of willow trees we planted to remember them. We remember them in our hearts and in our deeds. President Lincoln concluded his second inaugural address with a call for the Nation to "care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan." Lincoln's charge remains our sacred duty today. The 40 Montanans we remember today left behind 28 children who will be growing up without them.

I also applaud a group of patriotic Montanans who are working to make sure those children can get a college education in Montana. Grateful Nation Montana is a proud example of answering the call to serve, serving those who proudly served us. Their mission is to provide college scholarships at Montana schools for the sons and daughters of our fallen heroes.

We must remember our vets. To all of our veterans and families of veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice, we want them to know they are not alone.

Let's recommit ourselves to making sure our veterans come home safely to good-paying jobs and a nation that honors their sacrifices.

NATIONAL AG WEEK

I would like to speak on another important issue in my home State as we mark National Ag Week. President Dwight D. Eisenhower once said, "Farming looks mighty easy when your plow is a pencil, and you're a thousand miles from the corn field." Truer words were never spoken to describe the divide of how agriculture is viewed between Washington, DC, and Montana.

Agriculture is a central part of who we are as Montanans. Fifty percent of Montana's economy is tied to ranching and farming, supporting one in five jobs in Montana.

I had the privilege to grow up on a ranch outside of Helena, MT, near Wolf Creek, MT. It taught me firsthand the values of hard work, faith, family, and doing what is right. Those are the values I take with me to work every day.

Paul Harvey, who got his start in broadcasting in Montana, said it best in his poem "So God Made a Farmer":

God looked down on the Earth he created and said, I need a caretaker for this world I have made, and so God made a farmer.

So as part of trying to bridge that divide between Washington, DC, and Montana, I honor the strong legacy of farming and ranching families in Montana by celebrating National Ag Day. For those Montana families involved in agriculture, it is so much more than a livelihood, it is a way of life. I am honored to represent so many ranchers, so many farmers from Montana who have dedicated their lives to the land and provide a service from which everyone in the world benefits.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. The bill we are debating, the so-called continuing resolution, spends slightly more than \$1 trillion between now and the end of the fiscal year. As those who were either on the floor or watching a few moments ago discovered, the opportunity to amend this bill in even a minor fashion, although, in my view, an important fashion, was denied.

So the Senate, in passing the CR, will spend more than \$1 trillion, and we have had the opportunity to vote on two amendments, potentially three. That is the total extent to which 100 Senators representing millions of Americans have had the chance to influence the outcome, the content of a significant bill that spends lots of money.

The amendment I have been trying to offer, in my view, is an important one.

One of the things the administration announced following sequestration was that the control tower program, which provides about 179 air traffic control towers across the country, would be eliminated. That certainly is of importance to those who fly. It is important to people in our States, rural America. But this is not just a rural issue. These control towers are located in large cities across our country.

I have been trying to fathom why the Department of Transportation would, in a sense, single out this program. It is hard for me to fathom a good answer to that question.

As close as I can come is there are those in Washington, DC, who wish to demonstrate we can't cut a dime. We can't cut \$85 billion from Federal spending, a \$3.6 trillion spending program. We can't eliminate 28 days of spending at all. To prove that point, they apparently wish to single out programs which are the most important to Americans.

The idea we would put at risk an air traffic control tower program which is so important to the flying and traveling public is amazing to me. Again, it is not I think that the sequestration and the 5-percent cut in this program could not be handled by the Department of Transportation, but that is not what the Department of Transportation is doing.

In fact, the amendment which I hope to offer continues the sequestration and reduces the program spending by 5 percent. What the Department of Transportation is doing is eliminating the program, reducing the spending in this program by 75 percent.

Again, I can't figure out why this program of such importance would be treated in this fashion unless there are those who simply wish to demonstrate anytime we attempt to reduce spending—it is actually not even reducing spending; sequestration reduces the increase in spending. The only thing I can think of is there are people who wish to demonstrate here we cannot do that without having huge consequences to the safety and security of Americans. In my view, that concept certainly is false. We can find savings, but

beyond that it is a dangerous game to play in trying to prove a point we can't cut spending by putting at risk those who utilize air traffic control towers.

My frustration is increased by the fact we are spending all this money and the bill comes to the floor. I serve on the Appropriations Committee. I ought to have the opportunity to deal with this bill in the committee on which I serve. This hasn't happened.

I think what is my next opportunity, since I didn't have one as a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee? Maybe I ought to find colleagues from across the aisle, from around the country, rural, urban, Republican, Democrat, who would understand the value of this program. I did this and we found 23 sponsors of this amendment. We could probably find more. The point I wish to make this evening is 13 of those 23 are Democrat sponsors.

This place ought to function. We have been asked, why can't we work together? Why can't we find bipartisan ways to work together, 23 Senators, where 10 Republicans and 13 Democrats come together to say, yes, this needs to pass? Yet I have had no opportunity to offer that amendment. Numerous Members of the Senate from both sides of the aisle, but especially Democratic Senators, visit with me on the Senate floor saying, why can't you get this amendment made in order? It is a good amendment.

I don't have a good answer for that question.

We have worked hard with the chairperson and the ranking Republican on the committee. We have worked across the aisle and worked with the leadership, attempting to clarify how important this amendment is. Yet we will spend more than \$1 trillion. However, one amendment, which transfers \$50 million from two accounts, from unencumbered balances and from research funds, to keep the air traffic control program alive and well, is not in order.

As a member of the Appropriations Committee, my hope was I could solve this problem in the normal appropriations process. We spoke about this tonight. The majority leader spoke about getting back to the regular order and working on appropriations bills. Presumably sometime this week—although as a result of this amendment not being made in order, it will be later in the week than expected—we will get to the budget. Presumably we will pass a budget and go through the appropriations process.

The problem is I, as a member of the Appropriations Committee, and my colleagues who care about this program, who serve on this committee and who serve in the Senate, will have no opportunity to save this program. The Department of Transportation, the U.S. Department of Transportation, is going to terminate this program on April 7. By the time we ever get to regular order, if and when we do, the program will be eliminated. We will have

lost the only opportunity, which is now on this continuing resolution, to make certain this program remains in place.

If we do what we ought to do here, come together and find a solution, reach bipartisan agreement, we ought to have the opportunity to address \$50 million out of a more than \$1 trillion bill. The idea we would pass a \$1 trillion appropriations bill, with only allowing two, maybe three amendments, is something which again suggests we do not have our order in the appropriate place.

This is certainly important to folks across the country, and it is something which deserves attention and deserves a vote. It is something the American public ought to insist we not play the game of whether we can cut anything and put their safety at risk.

My plea to my colleagues tonight, having voted to advance this bill and cloture has been granted, which means no amendments are in order, I would ask our colleagues to realize the importance of this amendment and potentially others. Other Members of the Senate wish to offer amendments to establish and prove our priorities and, as the majority leader, demonstrate we can govern. The majority leader spoke about proving to the American people we can govern by passing this bill. It seems to me governing is something more than passing a continuing resolution without the opportunity for Members of the Senate to make their imprint on behalf of their constituents, and in my case Kansans, on behalf of the American people.

The air transportation system is essential to local communities and it is vital to our economic engine. It matters across the country. This amendment, if I am allowed to offer it, would continue access to the system which has worked so well for so many communities across our country. My plea is between now and when the 30 hours runs on the postcloture debate of this bill, there are those in the Senate who will work with me and others to see the amendment process works and we return to the days in which a Senator has the ability to influence the outcome of important pieces of legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

SEQUESTER AND CLIMATE DISRUPTION

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I have come to the floor to talk about a very important issue called climate change or climate disruption.

Before I do, I wish to address the issue my colleague has raised. He did not want to stop debate on the continuing resolution bill because he wanted to offer an amendment to ensure we cut somewhere as well as keep the FAA able to keep open air traffic control towers.

As someone who fought a partial government shutdown which shut down the FAA, my friends on the Republican side—my friend wasn't here then—I can tell you I was instrumental in making

sure we passed that FAA authorization bill. It was a great bill.

It breaks my heart to see this sequester in action. This is not the way to govern.

I respect my colleague's point of view. He has a right to his opinion, but to say this is the only opportunity to stop the sequester is absolutely incorrect. The President has said he is ready to sit down with the Republicans, pass a balanced plan which would fix the sequester, get the FAA back up to snuff, take care of all of our problems which were caused because of the sequester, deficit reduction, and balance our budget. If this happens, this sequester will end not only for the FAA—my friend is right, this is ridiculous—but for the 70,000 children who are being cut out of Head Start. Why isn't there more discussion about that when we know every dollar invested in a child in Head Start saves \$10 because they get that head start in life?

Where is the outrage of the 421,000 fewer HIV tests? This is a public health emergency when 421,000 people can't get their HIV test. They don't know if they are HIV positive and could spread the virus. This is what is happening with this sequester.

There are 10,500 teacher positions lost and 2,700 will lose title I funds, which amounts to 1 million children who will lose special reading help because of the sequester.

I think we all agree the sequester is no way to govern. We can get to a balanced budget without a sequester. We did that under Bill Clinton. We had a balanced approach. We made investments in our people, we cut out unnecessary spending, and we had a fair Tax Code.

I could go on with the problems. There are 25,000 fewer women who will not receive breast cancer screening. I could offer an amendment on that. I want to offer an amendment on that. I understand we need to keep the government running, and that is what this continuing resolution does.

I praise the Republicans on the other side who crossed over to vote with Democrats. Thank you very much for seeing we can't turn this bill into everyone's favorite amendment to restore something which is cut because of the sequester, which none of us ever thought was going to move forward.

I want to repeat this. My friend speaks about the FAA. I agree with him. I hope he would agree with me on Head Start, on teachers, on title I, on HIV tests, and on breast cancer screenings. What about the \$540 million which is cut from the Small Business Administration loan program which is so critical to our small businesses and job creation? There are 600,000 children losing their nutrition assistance because of the sequester.

Let's all agree. The sequester is bad, and we need to stop it. Why not do it in the right way, which is to sit down with the President, ensure we can get the deficit reduction the sequester is

bringing in in a better way. He is offering this. He is offering a balanced plan. All of these cries about, oh, they are cutting this, that, and the other—it is all bad. Sequester is not the way to budget or to govern.

We have 1 week to keep this government open. The House has told us not to start a series of amendments or we are never going to be able to keep the government open. Let's do our work and keep this as clean as we can. Let's make sure we all listen to our President, who was reelected in a huge victory. He said he wanted to move us toward balance with a balanced plan, cuts in spending, new revenues. PATTY MURRAY's budget, the Democratic budget, does that.

I am very pleased we are moving toward keeping this government open. This is the basic thing we need to do—keep this simple and move on.

As you know, I am the chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee. It is a joy for me to have that job, truly. My whole life I have cared about environment and about infrastructure. The way the Senate works, they put those two together. Not only am I able to speak about clean air, safe drinking water, cleaning up Superfund sites, and protecting the health of our families, but I also get to talk about jobs which are created when we build roads, highways, and water systems.

There is something which does not bring us together on that committee, and that is the issue of climate change. What I have decided to do is come down to the floor every Monday possible when the floor is available to speak a few minutes about the devastating consequences of unchecked climate disruption. I wish to discuss and put into the RECORD every week the latest scientific information. On March 4 I began these talks and spoke about a front-page story in USA Today which spotlights the impacts of climate change unfolding around us. The story is the first in a year-long series called "Why You Should Sweat Climate Change." It describes how climate disruption is happening all around us. Last week I discussed a report entitled "The 2013 High Risk List," which was a GAO study, Government Accountability Office study, which said climate disruption is leading to intense weather events, such as Superstorm Sandy, which threaten our Nation and the finances of our Nation. Plus, I told colleagues of an Oregon State study which appeared in Science which said that we have had the warmest decade in over 11,000 years—the warmest decade in over 11,000 years. Now, not 11 years, not 1,100 years, but 11,000 years. So Earth to my Republican colleagues, please wake up to this fact and let's do something about it.

Today I want to talk about the impact of unchecked climate change on the health of our people. This is a statement made by Dr. Cecil Wilson—and let's look at this chart—the former

president of the AMA, the American Medical Association:

The scientific evidence clearly indicates that our climate is changing, air pollution is increasing, weather is becoming more extreme, and with these changes come public health consequences.

That is why our President made a finding there actually is a danger to public health. It is called an endangerment finding for a reason. It is putting our people in danger. Wake up, colleagues. Please, wake up before it is too late.

The fact is the Bush administration found—and we got this through documentation—that climate change was a threat. The CIA has found that climate change is a threat. The defense establishment has found that climate change is a threat. The only place that doesn't seem to get excited about it is right here, in a bipartisan way, in the Senate.

Again, we know temperatures are continuing to increase. The Draft National Climate Assessment of January 11, 2013, said this:

Heat caused by climate disruption is especially harmful to our children.

Now I want to talk to colleagues who might just be listening. They might not be because it is 7:20 at night, but if they are, you all say you want to protect our kids. You all love your children and your grandchildren and your nieces and your nephews. This is according to the American Academy of Pediatrics Committee—and I think we have a chart on that:

Anticipated direct health consequences of climate change include injury and death from extreme weather events and natural disasters, increases in climate-sensitive infectious diseases, increases in air pollution-related illness, and more heat-related, potentially fatal illness. Within all of these categories, children have increased vulnerability compared with other groups.

Again, I say to my colleagues, if we were sent here to do anything, it is to protect the health and safety of our children, for goodness' sakes, and they are one of the most vulnerable groups if we don't act on climate change. And if that doesn't move you, I say to my friends, what about the elderly? They are particularly vulnerable. This is from the Draft National Climate Assessment.

Older people are at much higher risk of dying during extreme heat events. Pre-existing health conditions also make the elderly susceptible to cardiac and respiratory impacts of air pollution and to more severe consequences from infectious diseases.

So if I didn't touch your heart with your kids and grandkids, how about your grandmas, your grandpas, your great-grandmas, and your great-grandpas. They also are terribly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

Laurence Kalkstein, a University of Miami professor, who studies the effects of heat on health, said:

Climate change is a silent killer. Heat can cause fatalities among even the fittest.

It is a silent killer. And he knows because he studies the impact of heat on our health.

So let's not be silent. Maybe climate change is a silent killer, but we can't be silent in the face of the information we have. Continuing to quote Laurence Kalkstein:

The warming planet can cause many other serious health problems that are harmful to our families. Scientists predict they will get worse.

Scientists believe it will only get worse. Listen to what they say:

Heatwaves are also associated with increased hospital admissions for cardiovascular, kidney and respiratory disorders. Extreme summer heat is increasing in the U.S., and climate projections indicate that extreme heat events will be much more frequent and intense in coming decades.

Is this the future we want for our people, increased hospital admissions for cardiovascular, kidney, and respiratory disorders? I think not. But, boy, part of me thinks so. I can't seem to get anybody excited about this in the Senate.

You might ask me why that is? I have my theories. There is a lot of power on the other side. There is a lot of power on the other side—people who don't want to move off coal, people who don't want to move off oil. There is a lot of power on the other side.

The increase in temperatures can lead to respiratory illnesses associated with air pollution, such as asthma. Have you ever seen a child with asthma gasping for breath? I say to my colleagues, asthma is a leading cause of hospital admissions for kids at school. I go around and visit the schools, and I ask a simple question: How many of you kids have asthma or know someone with asthma? Almost 50 percent of the room has hands up.

If you saw a child gasping for air on the street, you would hold them close, you would calm them down, you would get them oxygen, you would do everything in your power. You would call 9-1-1, you would take them to the hospital, you would sit by their side, you would hold their hand, you would nurse them back to health.

We have a situation, folks, where climate disruption is going to bring us more cases of asthma. Let's not stand with the giant polluters. Let's move to clean energy. Let's clean up our act and save our children, save our grandparents.

We are not talking about a remote possibility sometime in the near future. Climate disruption is here. It is happening before our eyes. More American children are getting asthma and allergies, more seniors are suffering from heat strokes. And let me tell you about what is happening in New York right now. They are seeing indications that extreme weather events such as Superstorm Sandy are linked to health problems.

They have already given a name to a cough that has developed in that part of the country known locally as the

Rockaway cough because it is in Rockaway. The Rockaway Peninsula on Long Island, NY, was devastated by Sandy. Lives were lost, homes and businesses were destroyed, and now local residents are experiencing health problems from the flooding—coughing, which is a common symptom, health officials said, that could come from mold or the haze of dust and sand kicked up by the storm and demolitions. Governor Cuomo said they are seeing these so-called 100-year storms—supposed to come once in 100 years—all the time.

I say to my colleagues: Wake up to the truth. Look out the window. Figure it out.

Look at this. Is this what we want to see in our country?

I was speaking to Senator WARREN about what happened recently, and I was shocked to see houses in Massachusetts on the beach, beautiful homes, being totally razed and taken away because the ocean is moving so close they can't stay there. It is happening before our eyes. Right here.

With the haze of dust and sand kicked up by the storm and demolitions, the air in the Rockaways is so full of particles the traffic police wear masks, though many recovery workers do not, and that worries people who recall the fallout of another disaster.

Another real threat we are seeing more and more in the West is wildfires. Wildfire smoke contains dangerous compounds. Why do we see this? The droughts that are coming. Smoke exposure increases respiratory and cardiovascular hospitalizations, emergency department visits for asthma, bronchitis, chest pain, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, respiratory infections, and medical visits for lung illnesses, and has been associated with hundreds of thousands of global deaths annually.

That is the bad news. Now, if I stopped here, I wouldn't sleep very well tonight, having gone through all this. But there is good news. We can take steps now to address climate change, and those steps will benefit public health. We have an opportunity to turn this crisis into a win-win situation. When we reduce carbon pollution from powerplants to address climate disruption, we reduce dangerous air pollutants, such as soot and toxic metals that are harmful to our health.

Here is a chart: Policies and other strategies intended to reduce carbon pollution and mitigate climate change can often have independent influences on human health. For example, when you reduce carbon emissions, you reduce air pollutants, such as particles and sulfur dioxides.

We call that cobenefits, Mr. President. When you go after one kind of pollution—carbon pollution—you get the cobenefits of going after the soot, the small particles that lodge in our lungs. So we know when we reduce carbon emissions, we reduce those small particles and sulfur dioxide.

Here is the other good news. As we move away from the very dirty power sources of, what I hope will be, the past, and we move toward clean energy, we help our families' budgets because we move away from polluting automobiles. I drive a hybrid, a plug-in hybrid car. I have to tell you, it is pretty amazing. I get the first 12 miles on electricity, and if I do a few chores and come home and plug the car in again, then when I go past the 12 miles, it goes to a hybrid, which is part gas, part electric. So overall I am getting about 150 miles to the gallon. You know what. That feels pretty good when you don't have to stop and fill up your car all the time and get the sweats because of what it costs to fill up that car.

President Obama and my colleague Senator FEINSTEIN, and my former colleague Senator SNOWE, I have to compliment them because in a bipartisan way they moved us toward fuel efficiency. So we are moving toward 50-miles-per-gallon fuel efficiency, and that will help us. But we have to do more.

We have to do more because the health costs associated with climate change are heartbreaking and expensive. Taking steps to reduce carbon pollution will lower our doctors' bills when we don't have kids wheezing and gasping for air. The evidence is clear: Climate change is a public health threat.

We have moved before when we have seen threats to public health. We did it on cigarettes. I was here when the Congress voted to ban smoking on airplanes. Let me tell you, that was a hard vote. We had all the money of the cigarette and tobacco companies against us. And I want to compliment Senators LAUTENBERG and DURBIN. Senator DURBIN was in the House. This was a long time ago, but I can tell you what it was like because I do so much travel across the country.

Mr. President, I would get off the plane where there was smoking, and I would reek of smoke. You felt it all over, and you certainly were breathing it in. It was unhealthy. Everyone said it would never happen; that we would never, ever ban smoking on the airlines. But guess what. We did the right thing.

Now some people say: Well, how do you know that human activity and the kinds of power we are using, the dirty oil and so on, the coal, is causing this? Let me tell you how I know. Because 98 percent of the scientists tell me so.

People say, what if they are wrong. Ninety-eight percent of the scientists agree that human activity is causing this climate disruption. If you stand with the 2 percent, you are standing with the 2 percent who said smoking never caused lung cancer. I would say, if we went to the doctor and the doctor looked at us and said there is a 98-percent chance if you don't change your eating habits or your smoking habits you are going to die an early death, you would say, 98 percent chance? OK,

I will change my ways. Well, 98 percent of the scientists are telling us to change our ways when it comes to carbon pollution.

How do we do that in a way that is smart? We have several bills to put a price on carbon. We have the Sanders-Boxer bill. We have the Whitehouse bill. There will be other bills. Once we put a price on carbon, it makes sense because we are factoring in the true cost of carbon pollution, which I just explained is enormous in public health alone and economics related to superstorms and the rest.

So we need to put a price on carbon. What BERNIE SANDERS and I do is we take the funds that come in from that and we give it right back to the people and say: Here is a check, and now you can pay for your new clean energy. It is kind of capping the carbon and giving a dividend to the people. With the rest of the money we lower the deficit, we invest in solar rooftops, and a little bit in solar transportation. It is the way to go.

Some say wait. We can't wait. We wasted 8 long years when George W. Bush was President. Do you know why? He said carbon pollution wasn't covered in the Clean Air Act. All one had to do was read the Clean Air Act. I am not an attorney, but it is right there. It says, in essence, here are the following pollutants that are covered, and it listed greenhouse gas emissions. But, oh, no. He took it all the way to the Supreme Court and wasted 8 long years while the problem got worse and worse.

So here is the deal. Here is a quote from Washington School of Public Health, University of Washington, Dr. Howard Frumkin, who says:

In public health, when faced with threats to entire populations, we act. For infectious diseases, we vaccinate.

If 98 percent of the doctors say vaccinate to prevent illness, there is always 2 percent who are going to say don't do it. But we go with 98 percent.

For lung cancer, we ban smoking.

We didn't stand with the doctors who were paid off by big tobacco. We stood with the doctors who had an independent judgment, and we banned smoking on airplanes and in close quarters and in the Senate cloakroom and all the other places in government buildings.

For injuries, we install seat belts and air bags.

Another big battle. Remember that battle? The auto companies said: We don't want to spend the money installing airbags or seatbelts. We said: You have to do it. You know what. It is worth the cost, and so many lives are saved.

For obesity, we promote physical activity and healthier eating.

The First Lady has taken this on as a cause and we are starting to see a change. We have a long way to go. Why do that? Because we know the connection between obesity and diabetes and heart disease and stroke. So even

though it is a difficult issue, we have tackled it.

For climate change, we need to act.

We surely do. I am talking to pretty much an empty Chamber, but I am glad the Presiding Officer is here, and I feel a few people are watching. It is good. But there are a few of us who are determined to keep on bringing the facts to the floor of the Senate. Everyone has the right to act or not act, but I believe we need to make the record now, because when my grandchildren grow up, I want them to look back and say: Wow. That was great what grandma's generation did. They took care of this issue. I don't want them to look back and say: What were they thinking? What was wrong with them? Why didn't they act when they could have made a difference?

So next week I will be back. I will be talking about national security threats. This is one of the biggest national security threats we face. That doesn't come from me. That comes from the Pentagon. It comes from the CIA. It comes from the national security teams. So we can just close our eyes to this and we can wish it goes away, but it is not going away or we can ease the pain of climate disruption by moving to clean energy, energy efficiency, and we will face a win-win as we eventually have better public health, save money, and save the planet.

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, I come to the floor today in strong opposition to Amendment No. 115, offered by the junior Senator from Pennsylvania, to strike funding for the Department of Defense's, DoD, Advanced Drop-In Biofuel Production.

The intent of this amendment is to further limit the Department of Defense's ability to use alternative fuels to enhance our country's national security. Under the authorities of the Defense Production Act, DPA, the Department of Defense has created the Advanced Drop-In Biofuels Production Project. This initiative is focused on creating a public-private partnership that will provide incentives for private-sector investment in cost competitive, advanced biofuels production capability. It also requires at least a one-to-one cost share with private stakeholders. During consideration of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2013, the Senate demonstrated bipartisan support for DoD's alternative energy initiatives. This amendment would prevent DoD from taking the necessary steps to diversify its energy supply.

As chairman of the Banking Committee, which has jurisdiction over the DPA, I believe it is misguided to limit the authority of the Defense Department to continue with this project. As one of the largest consumers of oil in the world, the Department of Defense spent \$17 billion in fiscal year 2011 on petroleum-based fuels. When oil prices spike, this dependency forces the Department of Defense to reallocate fund-

ing from other critical needs. Last year alone, spikes in oil prices required the Navy to pay an additional \$500 million on higher fuel costs. Amendment No. 115 will further increase DoD's vulnerability to fluctuations in the price of oil.

This amendment should also be opposed because if it were adopted it would not have the effect intended. Due to a technical drafting error this amendment would not strip money from the account that funds biofuel production, but rather other unrelated programs at the DoD. The amendment still scores in outlays per the Congressional Budget Office and is subject to a budget point of order. This technical drafting error is another reason for Members to oppose this amendment.

The renewable fuels industry has played an important role in addressing our energy needs. Unfortunately, this amendment would hinder our Nation's ability to promote renewable domestic energy sources. We should allow the Defense Department to retain its authority to take steps to diversify the energy sources available to our military. Our national security relies on energy security, and this amendment would weaken both.

I urge all my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE JOE CHRIST

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, with a heavy heart, I rise today to say a few words about a wonderful, talented public servant who unexpectedly passed away recently.

Joseph Christ was a longtime prosecutor in St. Clair County, IL, home of the city that I grew up in, East St. Louis.

In his almost 20 years as an assistant State's attorney, he worked hard to keep criminals off our streets and help victims' families find justice.

Then, just two weeks ago, he was sworn in as an Associate Judge on Illinois' 20th Circuit and began his new journey.

His colleagues from the prosecutor's office said great things about his time there and what a great judge he would make.

But the next weekend, while on an out-of-town trip a few days after being sworn in, he passed away from natural—though certainly unexpected—causes.

We will never know all the good things he would have accomplished as judge, but we can reflect on the good he did while he was with us.

Surely his record indicates that he would have accomplished many more good deeds in the years to come.

He was taken from his wife and children too soon. They are in my thoughts and prayers.

RECOGNIZING THE IAWP AND DICK FREEMAN

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I would like to congratulate the International Association of Workforce Professionals, IAWP, for a century of leadership in enhancing the professionalism and excellence of America's workforce systems. IAWP will have a special celebration of this centennial milestone during its annual International Educational Conference in Chicago from July 6 to 10. IAWP was founded in Chicago and also celebrated its 50th and 75th anniversaries in that great Midwestern city. The association will honor its founder, W.M. Leiserson, superintendent of Wisconsin Employment Offices. In 1913, he reached out to his counterparts in other States to organize a nationwide association of public employment offices. Since its founding, IAWP has consistently worked to advance its founding principles: to provide members with education, leadership opportunities, information exchange, and recognition of excellence. In particular I would also like to applaud one of my constituents, Dick Freeman, who is receiving a much deserved Lifetime Achievement Award from IAWP at its July conference.

Dick has been a member of the Iowa chapter of IAWP for 41 years, including serving as the Iowa legislative chair since 1985. He has received the Iowa I-Care Award numerous times during his tenure of more than four decades with the association. This award is given for professionals who perform above and beyond normal leadership duties.

Dick played an important role in planning and hosting IAWP's 1990 International Educational Conference in Des Moines. He was the deputy director of the Iowa chapter when it chose to compete to host that year's International Education Conference. Iowa won the bid thanks to Dick's initiative and persistence. Approximately 1,200 IAWP members attended the 1990 conference in Iowa.

Mr. President, I am very pleased to recognize Dick Freeman for his many decades of dedicated service to IAWP members in Iowa and all across the Nation. Again, I congratulate the International Association of Workforce Professionals for 100 years of service to America's workers.