

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise in support of the Reid-Mikulski amendment to the continuing resolution. Our amendment makes two important changes in the House CR. First the amendment clears out the toxic political item in the House CR—defunding the Affordable Care Act. It also removes the debt-limit provision that threatens the full faith and credit of the United States. It changes the date of the CR from December 15 to November 15 to see if we can't get to vote on an omnibus bill and end the sequester.

We are out of time. The fiscal year ends in 3 days. Let's pass the Reid-Mikulski amendment, let's pass the CR, and let's keep America's government working as hard as its taxpayers.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, this is the moment of truth. We need to be absolutely clear about what we are voting on here. A "yes" vote will be a vote to fund ObamaCare because it will take out of the underlying continuing resolution the House position that Republicans have universally supported to defund ObamaCare.

I ask my colleagues, before they vote yes on this important amendment, Do you really want to be responsible for killing more jobs? Do you really want to be responsible for more people losing their health insurance and their own doctors? Do you really want to be responsible for making full-time work part-time work? If not, then vote no.

This is a second chance, and in life we don't get many second chances. I hope our colleagues will take advantage of the opportunity.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 1974.

The yeas and nays were previously ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Once again, a reminder that expressions of approval or disapproval are not allowed in the Senate.

Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) would have voted "nay" and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) would have voted "nay".

The result was announced—yeas 54, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 208 Leg.]

YEAS—54

Baldwin	Casey	Heitkamp
Baucus	Coons	Hirono
Begich	Donnelly	Johnson (SD)
Bennet	Durbin	Kaine
Blumenthal	Feinstein	King
Boxer	Franken	Klobuchar
Brown	Gillibrand	Landrieu
Cantwell	Hagan	Leahy
Cardin	Harkin	Levin
Carper	Heinrich	Manchin

Markey	Pryor	Stabenow
McCaskill	Reed	Tester
Menendez	Reid	Udall (CO)
Merkley	Rockefeller	Udall (NM)
Mikulski	Sanders	Warner
Murphy	Schatz	Warren
Murray	Schumer	Whitehouse
Nelson	Shaheen	Wyden

NAYS—44

Alexander	Cruz	Moran
Ayotte	Enzi	Murkowski
Barrasso	Fischer	Paul
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Heller	Roberts
Chambliss	Hoeven	Rubio
Chiesa	Inhofe	Scott
Coats	Isakson	Sessions
Coburn	Johanns	Shelby
Cochran	Johnson (WI)	Thune
Collins	Kirk	Toomey
Corker	Lee	Vitter
Cornyn	McCain	Wicker
Crapo	McConnell	

NOT VOTING—2

Flake	Hatch
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The amendment (No. 1974) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there is 2 minutes equally divided.

The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, it is now time to vote on final passage. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote for this. It will prevent a government shutdown. It will lay the groundwork for us to get to a solution on the long-term fiscal needs of our country, including to replace sequester and to come up with an approach to fund essential government services where we make investments that America desperately needs.

If the Senate keeps this government open, it means continuing our critical services, it avoids a shutdown, and it lays the groundwork for solving our problems.

I urge the adoption and passage of this bill.

We yield back our remaining time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed, and the joint resolution to be read a third time.

The joint resolution was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The joint resolution having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the joint resolution pass?

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

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

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE).

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Begich	Heitkamp	Pryor
Bennet	Hirono	Reed
Blumenthal	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Boxer	Kaine	Rockefeller
Brown	King	Sanders
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schatz
Cardin	Landrieu	Schumer
Carper	Leahy	Shaheen
Casey	Levin	Stabenow
Coons	Manchin	Tester
Donnelly	Markey	Udall (CO)
Durbin	McCaskill	Udall (NM)
Feinstein	Menendez	Warner
Franken	Merkley	Warren
Gillibrand	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Hagan	Murphy	Wyden

NAYS—44

Alexander	Cruz	Moran
Ayotte	Enzi	Murkowski
Barrasso	Fischer	Paul
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Heller	Roberts
Chambliss	Hoeven	Rubio
Chiesa	Inhofe	Scott
Coats	Isakson	Sessions
Coburn	Johanns	Shelby
Cochran	Johnson (WI)	Thune
Collins	Kirk	Toomey
Corker	Lee	Vitter
Cornyn	McCain	Wicker
Crapo	McConnell	

NOT VOTING—2

Flake	Hatch
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The joint resolution (H.J. Res. 59), as amended, was passed.

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent during Friday's cloture vote on H.J. Res. 59, the continuing resolution, as well as the motion to waive the budget act points of order with respect to H.J. Res. 59, the amendment offered by Senator REID to strike language defunding Obamacare, and final passage of the resolution, due to my son's wedding in Arizona. Had I been here, I would have voted against all four measures.

I would not have supported a bill that would weaken the meaningful spending reductions required by current law. The rate of spending under this continuing resolution exceeds the budget cap set by the Budget Control Act. Additionally, I took issue with the restrictive process under which this bill was considered on the floor: There was no indication that Senators would have had the opportunity to vote on an amendment that respects the overall budget cap and funds the government at the required \$967 billion level for next year.●

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business until 4 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10

minutes each, and the majority leader be recognized at 4 p.m.

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

COLORADO FLOODING

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I come to the floor to speak once again about the floods that were of biblical proportions that afflicted our State just a couple of weeks ago and the necessity of passing a piece of legislation, as we have done in the past on the heels of such natural disasters, that will allow my State to access existing emergency transportation funds more efficiently.

This is legislation my colleague and my friend and fellow Coloradan Senator BENNET and I have introduced.

It is critically important because it will allow us in Colorado to begin rebuilding our battered roads and bridges and highways without having to wait years for relief. In Colorado, hundreds of miles of roads and approximately 50 major bridges have been damaged. I want to display one photograph to give you a sense of what happened in Colorado.

I know Senator BENNET is here. I think he and I would agree that this is moderate damage represented in this photograph. There are many, many other scenes in our State where the roads are completely gone. You would not even know there was a road in the canyon like this one here. But this gives you a sense of what we have to do to repair all of this infrastructure.

Many towns, as I am implying, have seen the roads which provide access in and out of their communities severely limited. In fact, there a couple of communities that have been cut off. But the good news is that there are emergency relief dollars for transportation projects that have already been appropriated. They are available right now.

Why do I come to the floor, then, if that is the situation? There is an arbitrary statutory cap of \$100 million per disaster that applies to those funds. This could limit the flood relief that we receive and then unnecessarily delay repairs, not necessarily this year or next year, but for decades. But historically, this is the good news, this opportunity we all have, as Members of the House and the Senate, to lift this cap. It has routinely been recognized by Congress as an unwise impediment to helping States recover, particularly when they are hit by the size of this disaster.

We have made exceptions to this cap for nearly every natural disaster in recent years. We waived it for Hurricanes Gustav, Ike, and Sandy, as well as for the Missouri River Basin flooding in 2011. In other words, when States are devastated, as we have been by natural disasters, we as a Congress have said that putting arbitrary impediments in the way of relief efforts just does not make sense, especially—and this is really important to understand—when no new funds need to be appropriated.

The good news is, as I have alluded to, we are not asking Congress to appropriate any new money for transportation projects, nor does our bill increase budget authority or increase spending by the Federal Government. We are simply making sure that Colorado has fair access to the program that was created for the very purpose of helping States such as Colorado rebuild after a natural disaster.

In fact, if we do not raise the cap, then we may be in the situation—not just Senator BENNET and I—but the Congress may be in a position where we have to pursue something more serious that does require money—in other words, additional appropriations.

This is critically important. We have to do this. We need to. We must provide Colorado with certainty and relief as soon as possible. I want to again underline what happened in Colorado and what we are facing. Beginning on September 11, historic rains poured down. We had had a heat wave. We had been in the 90s, a very warm spell of weather. Literally overnight, beginning on September 11, historic rains poured down on our State without cessation.

Rivers overtopped their banks from Rocky Mountain National Park, which is our crown jewel in the National Park System in Colorado, all the way out onto the eastern plains. It washed away highways, it drowned family homes, and it transformed entire farms into lakes. Creeks such as South Boulder Creek, which runs right behind my home, swelled. My neighbors were evacuated. I could not get home for 24 hours.

Culverts such as those near Commerce City quickly filled with rushing water. Rivers such as the Big Thompson near Estes Park turned into walls of water that devastated entire communities.

Let me give you another set of metrics. The affected area covers nearly 200 square miles and over 80 percent of our State's population. If we counted—Senator BENNET and I would agree—5 million Coloradans that we represent or 80 percent of our State's population has been affected.

For a sense of scope—I did not know Senator MURPHY would be presiding—the floodwaters cover an area the size of Connecticut. Nine counties are considered major disasters. At least 9 Coloradans have died. Thank God it was not more. We had a lot of missing people, but we think we have identified where all of those people are. We lost 9 Coloradans. Nearly 20,000 homes are damaged or destroyed.

Nearly 2,500 people were evacuated by the Colorado National Guard, the most since Hurricane Katrina. Some bit of good news: The muddy waters have begun to recede. That has given us a better look at the vast extent of the damage: 200 miles of State highways and 50 bridges are damaged or destroyed. Preliminary estimates are that the infrastructure repairs could cost up to \$475 million.

I come with a heavy heart when I think about all of that. Then I have to also confess that this is a natural disaster that is beyond our capacity and Colorado's ability to address alone. We need help. We need support from our Federal partner.

I have always supported disaster aid whether I was serving in the House, as the presiding officer has, and when I have been in the Senate, for Hurricanes Sandy and Katrina and for all of the natural disasters that have hit our country since I began serving in the House in 1999.

I have to say that Coloradans now need our Federal partner to support our rebuilding and recovery efforts. I want also to say, though, in the face of this historic disaster, that I have been so heartened to see our Federal partners in the administration, led by FEMA, team up with our State leaders, who have been tireless, with the mayors, the council members, the county commissioners, our Governor, local communities, nonprofit organizations, and with countless friends and neighbors who have begun the hard work of recovery.

Our strong sense of community will allow us to recover and to rebuild stronger and more resolute than before. But we want to get going. We want to access these dollars right now. Those dollars are sitting in this account, waiting to help States such as Colorado rebuild and repair in the wake of a disaster. In fact, the U.S. Department of Transportation—I see our chairman of the EPW Committee, Senator BOXER, who is such a leader on infrastructure and knows infrastructure policy backwards and forwards—the U.S. Department of Transportation projects that Colorado, New York, and New Jersey, plus the 11 other States that have projects in the queue, could receive every single dollar they need and there would still be \$221 million in remaining funds in this account available for future emergencies across our country.

That is right. Everyone who has disaster-related infrastructure needs can receive relief, and we will still have significant funds to help other areas that may find themselves in need such as Colorado, New York, and New Jersey.

I want my colleagues to know that we have a real opportunity here. Coloradans need these dollars. These are legitimate uses of these dollars. Senator BENNET and I are going to be working every minute today, this weekend, next week, to make sure that Colorado can recover as quickly as possible. Perhaps in light of the challenges that we face in Congress, moving the government forward and doing what is right for the American people, maybe this is an example of how we can work together and do the right thing not just for Colorado but for the United States.

Mrs. BOXER. Would the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. I would.