

the individual mandate for a year. That would be fair to the middle class.

No. 2, the House has suggested that we can continue funding the government and be fair to those who are ill by repealing the medical device tax. Seventy-nine senators have voted for the medical device tax repeal, including a large number of Democratic senators.

No. 3, the House Republicans have said, let's continue to fund the government and be fair to the American people when it comes to health care. Treat the American people the same way Congress is treated.

And finally, most recently, the House Republicans have said, let's continue to fund the government and can we not just sit down and talk about it? Have a conference?

Which is the way, under our rules established by the Constitution, we're always supposed to resolve disputes. And the answer has been no from the Senate Democrats.

No, to giving the same consideration to the middle class, the people who are required to buy health insurance; no, to giving fairness to those who are ill by repealing the medical device tax; no, to giving fairness to the American people by treating them the same way Congress is treated; and no, to giving fairness to the system in saying can we not just sit down and talk in a conference, which is our way of resolving disputes.

And the answer by the President and the Senate Democrats is no, no, no.

The President's role is to bring us together. He said that during his campaigns. He has a great capacity for persuading the American people that he is right. He seems to be able to talk with the Iranian rulers, but not to the congressional leaders.

Our goal is fairness for the middle class, fairness for the taxpayer.

Our latest offer from the House of Representatives was, let's keep the government running and let's sit down according to our rules and have a conference and talk about it.

This stubbornness in the face of reasonableness will not be good for our country, will not be good for either political party, it will not help us to achieve the kind of result on this and other issues that the Founders intended by creating a system of checks and balances in our democratic form of government.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. I ask unanimous consent to be able to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

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

Mr. CARDIN. I yield first to the majority leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Madam President, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives holds the key to reopen the Federal Government. It is an

easy key to use. In fact, it is very simple. The key is to allow 435 Members of the House of Representatives to vote to reopen the Government, and do it now. It is not too late to avert the worst economic problems that this shutdown relates to. But you see, I am not the only one calling for the Speaker to open the government. I am not the only one calling on him to do the right thing.

This is what Republican Congressman SCOTT RIGELL, from Virginia said. He said it this morning. It is a direct quote:

We fought the good fight. It is time for a clean CR.

That is a Republican Congressman. If the House votes to reopen the government, Democrats will gladly go to conference. Unfortunately, I read that Speaker BOEHNER and House Republicans are engaging in silly political stunts instead. What he is going to do is have some Republicans, Members of the Congress, sit down for a photo op across from empty chairs. That is really unique. Has that ever been done before? Maybe only five or six thousand times since I have been in Washington. What they are really sitting down to instead of empty chairs is an empty stunt. I say to the House Republicans, it is time for the photo ops and those silly stunts to end. Shutting down the government is not kid stuff. That is kid stuff. Shutting down the government is deadly serious.

The business community has warned of the economic consequences of the shutdown. It is now being proven. For every day the Speaker refuses to use the key to reopen government, it costs the American economy billions of dollars—every day. The solution is as clear this morning as it was last night: Reopen the government. He holds the key to putting millions of public servants back to work. Once that happens we are happy to go to conference. But only if the government is reopened.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that following the remarks of Senator CARDIN, the Senate recess as provided under the previous order.

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

The Senator from Maryland.

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I see my colleague from Tennessee just left the floor, and I was listening to his comments. I know he is having a hard time—as many of our Senate colleagues are—understanding or justifying the actions of the Republicans in the House.

Make no mistake about it, this is a House Republican shutdown of the government. The majority leader was talking about the consequences. The House Republicans have tried to hold all of us hostage, but it is not going to work.

When they talk about negotiating, the majority leader is absolutely right: We have tried on numerous occasions to get to a conference on the budget only to find objections from the Republicans to sit around the table to talk about the budget of the country. We are not going to yield to extreme measures. We should have the government open, and then we should be negotiating the issues that are important.

I take this time to talk about our Federal workforce and to talk about the impact this shutdown will have on Federal workers and the people of Maryland and the people of our Nation. I am proud to represent Maryland in the Senate.

Once again Federal workers are going to be asked to make sacrifices on behalf of their country, but this time they don't understand it. This shutdown will have a negative impact on them and on our country. For 3 years Federal workers have been working without a pay increase or an adjustment of salary. I had my staff check some of the statistics on the number of Federal workers we have today compared to the historic numbers. We actually have fewer workers per capita today than we did in the 1950s. We are asking our Federal workforce to do more with less, and we are asking them to continue to work under sequestration when many have been furloughed.

Now our Federal workforce has been furloughed in great numbers and are uncertain as to whether they will receive a paycheck. There are Federal workers who are working today and they don't know when they are going to get their paychecks. It is wrong, and it is going to hurt families. They are going to have to try to figure out how to pay their bills without getting a paycheck.

This goes well beyond the Federal workers themselves. Look at the reductions we see in the Federal workforce here in the Washington area. What do you think is happening to the retail establishments, the small businesses, and our economy? We estimated in Maryland that we would lose \$15 million a day for every day the Federal Government is closed.

Mark Zandi said the impact of a Federal shutdown will increase unemployment by half a percent. In 1995 to 1996, the last time we had a shutdown, OMB estimated it cost the taxpayers \$1.4 billion. This is wasting taxpayers' money, and it is putting people under incredible stress as to how they are going to pay their bills. For what? To move an extreme agenda, to try to see if hostage-taking works in the Congress? This will have a major negative impact on our economy.

The private sector has recently created 7.5 million jobs over the last 42 months. There are more people on private nonfarm payrolls than at any time since September 2008. Jobless claims are close to a 5-year low. The second quarter of 2013 marked nine consecutive quarters of economic

growth, the longest stretch since before 2008. And now because of the House Republican shutdown, we want to reverse that? Do we want to go back to a failing economy? That is what is at stake here. Do we want to cost our taxpayers money with the inconvenience we are causing the people of this country by a government shutdown? Talk about life-threatening delays. The researchers at NIH are being compromised. The inability of NIH to take on new patients as a result of a shutdown absolutely affects the welfare of the people of our country. Small businesses are unable to get SBA loans. How do they run their businesses during this shutdown?

In my State of Maryland—and I know this is true around the country—the backlog on veterans getting their disability claims heard is tremendous. That will now grow as a result of this government shutdown.

The FDA is responsible for food safety. I could talk about a lot of different agencies. Forty-five percent of the FDA's workforce, or 6,620 employees, will be furloughed. The FDA will be unable to support the majority of its food safety nutrition and cosmetic activities. The FDA will also have to cease safety activities such as routine establishment inspections, some compliance and enforcement activities, monitoring imports, notification programs, et cetera. That is what this shutdown will cause. Do we want to make sure we have a safe food supply? Well, today it is not quite as clear as it was yesterday.

We know about the national parks and the zoo being closed. That makes no sense at all. People will be inconvenienced, but people's health will be put in jeopardy because of this House Republican shutdown. It is totally illogical.

We have tried to go to conference on the budget. There are three problems we have before we get a workable budget for this fiscal year. First, we have to keep government open; second, we have to make sure we pay our bills; and third, we have to get rid of sequestration. That is what we have to get done. And, yes, we have to sit down, Democrats and Republicans, to work out a budget for this fiscal year, but we can't do it while the government is closed.

When we fail to pass a budget—and quite frankly, it is the Republicans who have been unwilling to sit at a table to come up with a budget. The regular order is to pass a continuing resolution that continues the budget so the government can operate until we have a budget. We have always done that at the current level.

Well, the Democrats are willing to go even further. We are willing to take the Republicans' reduced budget number because of sequestration, and they can't even accept that because, quite frankly, there are too many on the other side of the aisle in the House who want a government shutdown. That is not the way we should be operating.

I am proud to represent so many Federal workers. I am proud to represent the people of Maryland, and we are going to continue to fight on behalf of the right policies. We are going to fight to make sure Federal workers are made whole when this is over, and that they are able to get their paychecks with full pay. It is going to be a struggle because of the attitude—particularly from the Republicans—in the House, but we are going to continue to fight for what is right for our Federal workforce and for the American people.

Let us pass a resolution to keep government open. Let us sit down and work out a budget for this coming year. Let's do what is right for the American people.

With that, I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:39 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. BALDWIN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will come to order.

The Senator from Illinois.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that there be a period of morning business for debate only until 5 p.m., with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees and with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and that the majority leader be recognized at 5 p.m.

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

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum and ask that the time that is consumed under the quorum call be equally divided between the Democrats and Republicans, and all subsequent quorum calls be equally divided between the two parties.

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The 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.

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I rise to continue the discussion on the situation in which we find ourselves, which is that the entire Government of the United States of America has been shut down, and those Federal employees who are working are working without pay.

This is a terrible situation. I implore the House to pass a clean short-term continuing funding resolution that the Senate sent over to them 4 days ago so we can reopen the government. Let's reopen the government. Let's reopen the Government of the United States of America. The way we reopen the government is to pass the Senate continuing funding resolution.

What would it do? It would fund the government at fiscal 2013 levels. That doesn't mean it adds new money; so there is no new money. It is keeping us at current spending levels. We would have a short-term continuing resolution until November 15 while we work out other issues, and then we can get over the speed bump of raising the debt ceiling. I believe that is the path forward.

Where we are now has terrible consequences. It has terrible consequences for our economy. It has terrible consequences for our standing in the world. It has terrible consequences for the functioning of our government.

We are speaking now about a shutdown of the government. Right now, there are hundreds of thousands of men and women who work for the Federal Government who signed up to do a job in the service of their Nation. They have literally, with the passing hours, had to either take a furlough—and a furlough means we have essentially laid them off; we have laid them off—or they are working because their work is essential, such as an FBI agent, but they are not getting paid. We are paying them with IOUs. This is not the United States of America.

I am thinking about those people who are working every single day. Let me paint a picture for my colleagues. In my own State, we are the headquarters to the National Weather Agency. People who watch TV think they get their weather news from either the Weather Channel or they get it from their local TV or radio station through doppler radar. It is terrific. But guess where they get their information. They get it from their Federal Government. They get it from the weather forecasters at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration who work hard every day predicting the weather and getting out the information that news people can use in their own community. So if a person is a farmer, he is getting that information. If a person is a waterman who works on the Chesapeake Bay and he has to make sure the storm is not coming while he is out there crabbing or oystering to keep his business going, he needs to know the weather. Whether a person is a county executive or a mayor, people need to know what their weather is going to be. So they have been on the job, whether they have been predicting hurricanes or tornadoes or giving us the basic day-to-day information. The weather forecasters are at their duty station, but what are we saying to them now? Guess what. Be there, but we are not going to pay you except through IOUs.