

or so. I said: Do you know Brian? Almost everyone knows him. Almost everyone said the same exact thing: What a fine man.

As I spoke to him yesterday—he is expected to make a recovery—I wished him and his family the best during this difficult time for him and for all of us. I wish a speedy recovery to the Secret Service agent who was also injured yesterday.

But I thought the most memorable thing we had in our short telephone conversation was, he said: My job is to keep you safe. He was not referring to me, even though he and I were on the phone. He meant his job was to make sure everyone is safe. That was something I will always remember.

These brave men and women put their lives on the line every day, Capitol Police, other law enforcement agencies who work here in the Capitol. Why do they do that? Because that is their job.

So my thanks go out to every Capitol Police officer. We owe them a debt of gratitude.

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. REID. I want to remind everyone listening that yesterday and today, the Capitol remains closed to most business. The Federal Government remains closed. In the newspaper today, it lists all of the layoffs. Today it has a graph of those in the administration area—not the legislative or judicial but in the administration. We have tens of thousands of public servants who are not furloughed, but they are working, including law enforcement officials, without pay. A number of people yesterday were out there risking their lives without pay. There are hundreds of thousands more, such as intelligence officers, to keep the Nation safe, who have been forced to leave their jobs, forgo their paychecks altogether.

Because of these furloughs, the Capitol Police, the FBI, and other Federal law enforcement agencies face additional risk, as they are asked to do their jobs with limited manpower and without the support they can typically depend on.

Congress owes it to them and to every American family to get past our differences, work through our disagreements, and work toward reopening the Federal Government. It is hard to comprehend what is going on. This is all because of President Obama's signature legislative issue that we were so fortunate to pass, to allow all Americans to have health care, as is the case in every industrialized nation in the world except our Nation.

We have as many as 45 million or 50 million people with no health insurance. I would hope my Republican colleagues understand the bill is 4 years old, it has been declared constitutional by the Supreme Court, it is in effect. Millions of people have gone on line this week to find out what they can do to have health insurance.

Mr. LEAHY. Would the leader yield for a question?

Mr. REID. Of course.

(Ms. HIRONO assumed the Chair.)

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, the leader has noted a number of times that a small group in the House of Representatives has held up and closed the government because they want to do away with what they call ObamaCare, the Affordable Care Act. So my question to the Senator is, in all of these discussions they have had, the 40 times they voted, have they ever once come up with an alternative piece of legislation that would provide for your children, if they are in college, to be on your health care policy, or if you have a member of your family with a pre-existing condition such as diabetes or has gone through cancer, have they come up with any alternative or is it just: We want nothing?

Mr. REID. Madam President, to my friend, the most senior Member of the Senate, in today's newspapers and in commentary on television and radio, even Republicans, prominent Republicans, former chairs—I have in my mind, which I read today, two former chairs of the National Republican Party—said: We have got to be for something, not just against everything.

That is the problem we have. They are against everything. Against everything. As the distinguished Senator from Vermont said, what are they for? We know what they are against, but what are they for?

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I thank the distinguished leader, because I know in my State of Vermont, people are happy, if they have children going to college, that they can keep them on their health insurance. Or if they have a spouse who had breast cancer, for example, they can still get health care, or whatever—diabetes and so on.

I think the distinguished leader has answered, no, they want to do away with all of this, and nothing in return. That is a nihilistic approach that makes no sense.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for debate only until 2 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The President pro tempore is recognized.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, several people have spoken. I was touched so much by the Chaplain's prayer and by the words of the leader about our Capitol Police. The leader, in his young days as a student, served as one of the Capitol Police.

Because I am President pro tempore, I do have a security detail. But long before I had that, I made it a point to go—every time I would see a police officer on this campus, I would say: You keep us all safe. Keep yourself safe. We worry about you.

I am wearing this pin applauding them today. I think we have to know, tourists who come here, Members, staff—everybody is kept safe by these brave men and women. I asked those who are assigned to me to join me in my office for a silent prayer yesterday for the safety and the recovery of the officer injured, but also for the safety of all of those police officers.

They rush in. They rush in when there is trouble. They do not say: Oh, gosh, I am not getting paid. Or, gee whiz, I am supposed to go off duty in a minute. They rush in, no questions asked. They are extraordinarily well trained, one of the best trained police departments anywhere in the country. I think we owe them a debt of gratitude.

We have also heard a lot over the last few days here on this floor about the costly impacts of this needless government shutdown. It is needless. Of course, the solution to reopening the government is an easy one; the Senate has passed a resolution which would reopen the government while we work on a meaningful compromise to address our budget and our national debt. Because of a small radical group of tea party activists in the House of Representatives, they will not even vote on it.

The House of Representatives has decided on a different approach. The irony of their parochial, bit-by-bit funding proposal is not lost on the hundreds of Vermonters who were given furlough notices on Tuesday, or the veterans in Vermont and across the country who fear the long-term impacts of a government shutdown.

They are holding the government hostage, and with it the millions of Americans impacted by this shutdown. They wish to pick and choose little popular things and say: Here, we are for that. They don't want to stand and vote yes or no on actual appropriations, because if they do that they have to take a position. It is easier to vote maybe. If they vote maybe, they can go home and say: Oh, we are for medical research. We are for the veterans.

No, they are not. They voted to shut it down. We had a Member of the House of Representatives on television posturing to a group of veterans saying isn't it terrible the administration is closing off the veterans' memorial. One of the veterans caught them and said: No, it is not the administration that is closing it, it is you. It is you people, the small group of the House of Representatives that has closed it down.

Why don't they bring the Senate-passed resolution to the House floor for a vote? This vote would end the shutdown. Instead, a handful of extreme ideologists in the House are deciding—

arbitrarily—who is worth supporting in this crisis, and when. Bring it to a vote. Have all 435 Members stand and vote, yes, we will open the veterans programs, the medical research, and everything or, no, we will not. They have to be on record yes or no.

The Senate Judiciary Committee heard testimony yesterday—the distinguished Presiding Officer is a member of that committee, the distinguished deputy majority leader is. We heard from the Director of National Intelligence about the danger to our country from the threat that increases every day because of all the people who had to be furloughed. Every day the shutdown continues, our readiness and preparedness declines.

That was evident on Tuesday when the Department of Defense released guidance to the National Guard that it would need to issue massive furloughs, even though the National Guard is essential in this country.

That included 450 technicians of the Vermont National Guard and an additional 100 Vermont Guardsmen who were recalled from Active orders—their weekend drills, cancelled. This is where 3,000 members of the Vermont Guard come together for joint training, so it results in a decrease in that readiness. This also impacts our national security just the type of scenario that Director Clapper mentioned.

Some of the 450 military technicians in Vermont who received furlough notices on Tuesday are at home without pay, after forfeiting 20 percent of their pay for six weeks this summer because of sequestration.

I know many of them personally. Some are neighbors of mine in Vermont. These are real people. I have heard from some of them. They have called and emailed my office. They are asking why their service to the country and their local communities, which is so essential to our military readiness and to our ability to respond to crises like natural disasters, can be so readily dismissed. I could not agree more with them. They are not getting paid every week as are the Members of the House of Representatives—the tea party group—who are holding them hostage.

I believe the number of furloughs in the National Guard was a misinterpretation by the Department of Defense. This week, the House and Senate adopted legislation to ensure that members of our Nation's military receive their pay, despite the government shutdown. I am the cochair of the National Guard Caucus. I supported this effort in part because the legislation specifically mentioned the Guard and reserves. Today, I have joined Senator MANCHIN and others in a letter asking the Secretary of Defense to reconsider the Department's interpretation.

The government shutdown also affects our veterans. There are nearly 50,000 veterans who call Vermont home. This shutdown is not how we thank our veterans and military members for their service. This is not how we show them our support.

I have received phone calls and emails from Vermonters about the impact of the government shutdown on services for veterans, but my distinguished colleague from Vermont, who is the chairman of the Veterans' Committee, has also heard from these people. These are real people. They showed up in support of this country when they were asked. Now they say: Why aren't you supporting us?

Veterans across the country know that while their benefits payments will continue in the near-term, furloughs within the Veterans Administration are unfair to our veterans who, after their service, were promised our support. Our veterans and military members, including those of our National Guard, should never question our commitment to their well-being, especially after all they have sacrificed to ensure ours. They now have a real question: what is our commitment to them? We didn't question their commitment to the country when they served, but now where is our commitment to them?

We are not going to solve this problem by adopting a piecemeal approach, meant to win headlines and promote the blame game. That is no way to run a government. The Senate already passed a bill, a clean continuing resolution, to keep our government running, and to fulfill our commitments. It's time to stop picking winners and losers. If we are serious about caring for our servicemembers and veterans, we need to get serious about moving beyond this shutdown.

The distinguished chair of the Budget Committee is on the floor. She got a budget through this committee. I remember passing the last vote—I think it was 5:30 on a Saturday morning after we had gone all day long. Then, when we wanted to go to conference to actually work out the differences with the House, oh, no, then they might actually have to vote on something. It is blocked by a Senator working with the tea party in the House, saying: Oh, no, we can't go to conference.

The same people are giving speeches saying: Why can't we have a budget? We passed a budget. Oh, no, now we might actually have to vote on something. We might have to vote yes or no instead of maybe. We are elected to vote yes or no, not maybe. Have the courage to do that.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant majority leader is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. I wish to thank the President pro tempore, as well as the majority leader for their comments this morning. I am wearing a button, as many of my colleagues are, that says thank you to the Capitol Police.

The one I am wearing is not one that was issued today but one I asked to be commissioned after 9/11 because I thought about the extraordinary courage these men and women showed that day when an imminent attack on this building was well known. Yet they did everything in their power to protect all

of us who work here and those who were visiting. I give a special thank you to them.

Yesterday was a tragic day. A young woman—it is still unclear what motivated her—was involved in an incident at the White House, backing into a police vehicle and then trying to escape, followed by a Secret Service officer. She drove toward the Capitol Building and, sadly, her life was taken.

It is understandable. We live in an era where this campus, the U.S. Capitol grounds are carefully guarded for obvious reasons. It is a clear, visible target to those who hate the United States. Someone in a car is a threat. We know that because car bombs are so common in some parts of the world and we are wary of vehicles that may be used to harm innocent visitors or people who work in the U.S. Capitol Building.

It will be some time before we sort out all the details of what led to this incident yesterday, but there is something we know very clearly; that is, that the men and women in the Capitol Police stepped forward to defend this Capitol Building and all those who work and visit here. They did this risking their own lives.

This morning's Washington Post has a few paragraphs on this which bear repeating for the record:

What seems beyond doubt is that Secret Service personnel, Capitol Police and probably many others rushed toward, not away from, danger—as they are trained to do and as Americans expect them to do. Inside Congress, aides took cover, traded anxious text messages and then went on with their work.

Like hundreds of thousands of other federal employees, these are men and women whose contributions have been demeaned by the federal shutdown, who are being asked to work without, at least for the moment, being paid—and who are doing their jobs with considerably more dignity than the House of Representatives has mustered.

"We all owe the Capitol Police a debt of gratitude for their work every day; no finer examples of professionalism & bravery," tweeted House Speaker John A. Boehner (R-Ohio). That's true. But Mr. Boehner owes them, and the rest of the federal workforce, more than a 140-character message of thanks. He owes them a paycheck; he owes them a budget; he owes them an apology.

How many times have we listened on the floor of the Senate as those from the other side of the aisle criticize federal workers, try in some way to demean the contribution they make to this great Nation, trying to find some way to lay them off, if not fire them, or to restrict their pay over and over; they are trampled on; they are political casualties time and again on the floor of the Senate.

Yet each and every one of us, every Member of Congress in the Senate and the House, our staffs and our families and those who visit are safe because of these men and women, these Federal workers. It is about time we realize when we shut down the government, it is the ultimate disrespect to these men and women who simply want to do their job to make this a safer and better nation.

It was very visible on the grounds right off the Capitol Building itself yesterday afternoon. While many of us were told to stay in our offices, don't move, for at least half an hour, these men and women risked their lives during a government shutdown when they aren't receiving a paycheck. It was very visible—and should have been visible to everyone—the irony of this situation that we shut down the government and yet ask them to risk their lives without promise of a paycheck.

I wish to mention one other thing that happened yesterday that may not have been noticed, where the impact of government shutdown is not quite as visible. In testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Wendy Sherman, Under Secretary of State, testified about the fear of Iran developing a nuclear bomb and sanctions imposed by the United States and the civilized world to persuade them not to develop a nuclear bomb.

She went on to say: The government shutdown that has furloughed 72 percent of the civilian intelligence employees in our government is not making this a safer country or giving us the eyes and ears around the world we need to make sure Iran does not develop a nuclear bomb, a nuclear weapon.

She added: Within the Department of the Treasury, 90 percent, 9 out of 10, of the people working in the agency which has the responsibility of specifically watching that the sanctions in Iran are enforced have been furloughed—90 percent of them.

It isn't only a matter of the visibility of Capitol Police risking their lives, despite this demeaning government shutdown, it is also that less visible, such as 72 percent of our intelligence workers charged with keeping America safe, avoiding another 9/11, have been sent home. Ninety percent of those who are watching carefully so Iran does not develop a nuclear weapon were sent home because of this government shutdown.

This is the third embarrassing, shameful day of this government shutdown. People say how could it possibly end? It could end very simply. Speaker JOHN BOEHNER has on his desk in the House of Representatives a continuing resolution which is a spending bill which will reopen the government for at least 6 weeks. He should call that for a vote today. He will receive bipartisan support. He shouldn't fear that. He should celebrate it, bipartisan support to reopen this government.

Then I hope he will accept the invitation of Senator REID and others to meet with Senator MURRAY, the chairman of the Budget Committee, sit down, plan the spending, plan the savings, and plan the important policy decisions—which we have for 6 months tried to bring to this floor—in a conference committee. Let's do it and do it today. Today should be the end of the government shutdown.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the editorial

from today's Washington Post and an article from The Daily Beast on Iran.

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

[From the Washington Post, Oct. 3, 2013]

ESSENTIAL WORKERS: THOSE DEDICATED TO SERVING THE PUBLIC DESERVE MORE THAN A BRIEF MESSAGE OF THANKS

The order went out to Capitol Hill personnel Thursday afternoon in capital letters: SHELTER IN PLACE. It was a terrifying moment for a community already on edge. The scare ended with less carnage than we have come to fear in such moments—but not before we were reminded again of the dedication of those who work for the government. Maybe that reminder will bring some politicians to their senses.

As we write this, investigators are trying to sort out the series of events that apparently began when a woman tried to drive her car through a security barrier near the White House and ended with shots fired near the U.S. Capitol. What the woman, who was killed, intended, whether police responded appropriately, what lessons may be drawn about the efficacy of security barriers: All of that remains to be examined.

What seems beyond doubt is that Secret Service personnel, Capitol Police and probably many others rushed toward, not away from, danger—as they are trained to do and as Americans expect them to do. Inside Congress, aides took cover, traded anxious text messages and then went on with their work.

Like hundreds of thousands of other federal employees, these are men and women whose contributions have been demeaned by the federal shutdown, who are being asked to work without, at least for the moment, being paid—and who are doing their jobs with considerably more dignity than the House of Representatives has mustered.

"We all owe the Capitol Police a debt of gratitude for their work every day; no finer examples of professionalism & bravery," tweeted House Speaker John A. Boehner (R-Ohio). That's true. But Mr. Boehner owes them, and the rest of the federal workforce, more than a 140-character message of thanks. He owes them a paycheck; he owes them a budget; he owes them an apology.

Beyond the shooting Thursday, Washington was full of the usual posturing, speculating, rumor-trading and jockeying for public relations advantage. Maybe the shutdown would be wrapped into the default. Maybe the Obamacare demands would be subsumed into "grand bargain" demands. Maybe this, maybe that.

Meanwhile, there are mothers who depend on federal assistance for nutrition for their children. There are motel owners and workers on Skyline Drive whose livelihood is threatened because the national parks are closed in what should be their peak season. There are dedicated scientists and food inspectors and intelligence analysts who have been told by Mr. Boehner that he and his fellow Republicans do not consider their work all that essential to the nation.

Those scientists and inspectors and analysts are not the nonessential ones.

[From the Daily Beast, Oct. 2, 2013]

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN EMPTIES OFFICES ENFORCING SANCTIONS ON IRAN

(By Josh Rogin)

The shutdown has forced the Treasury Department to furlough most of the employees enforcing sanctions on Iran, just as the U.S. is beginning new negotiations. Josh Rogin and Eli Lake report on the potential fallout.

With the government shut down, most U.S. officials enforcing sanctions on Iran are not

at work, potentially undermining pressure on Tehran as U.S.-Iran negotiations recommence, according to administration officials, lawmakers, and experts.

The Treasury Department has furloughed approximately 90 percent of the employees in its Office of Terrorist Financing and Intelligence (TFI), which is responsible for the monitoring of illicit activities and enforcement of sanctions related to several countries, including Iran, Syria, and North Korea, Treasury officials told The Daily Beast. The drastic scaling down of personnel working on those activities comes just as the Obama administration is engaging in its first set of diplomatic negotiations with the new Iranian government, led by President Hassan Rouhani (/articles/2013/09/26/what-hassan-rouhani-really-said-about-the-holocaust.html).

A subsection of TFI, the Office of Foreign Asset Control (OFAC), which implements the U.S. government's financial sanctions, has been forced to furlough nearly all its staff due to the lapse in congressional funding, said a Treasury Department spokesman.

"As a result, OFAC is unable to sustain its core functions of: issuing new sanctions designations against those enabling the governments of Iran and Syria as well as terrorist organizations, WMD proliferators, narcotics cartels, and transnational organized crime groups; investigating and penalizing sanctions violations; issuing licenses to authorize humanitarian and other important activities that might otherwise be barred by sanctions; and issuing new sanctions prohibitions and guidance," the spokesman said. "This massively reduced staffing not only impairs OFAC's ability to execute its mission, it also undermines TFI's broader efforts to combat money laundering and illicit finance, protect the integrity of the U.S. financial system, and disrupt the financial underpinnings of our adversaries."

Two other subsections of TFI, the Office of Intelligence and Analysis (OIA) and the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN), also are working with a skeleton crew. According to FinCEN's shutdown plan (PDF (http://www.treasury.gov/connect/blog/Documents/FinCEN%20Shutdown%20Plan_revised%20FY%202014_Web%20Version.pdf), 30 of 345 employees were kept on after appropriations ran out Oct. 1.

Administration officials often tout the various rounds of sanctions (/articles/2013/09/23/lawmakers-set-a-high-bar-for-iran-to-escape-sanctions.html) passed by Congress and signed by President Obama as crucial to pressuring the Iranian regime to strike a deal to bring its clandestine nuclear program into accordance with international standards of transparency and convince the world it is not developing a nuclear weapon.

"If the lights are not on, then the Iranians will engage in massive sanctions busting to try to replenish their dwindling foreign exchange reserves."

"Because of the extraordinary sanctions that we have been able to put in place over the last several years, the Iranians are now prepared, it appears, to negotiate," Obama said Monday (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/09/30/remarks-president-obama-and-prime-minister-netanyahu-israel-after-bilate>) after meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House. "But we enter into these negotiations very clear-eyed. They will not be easy. And anything that we do will require the highest standards of verification in order for us to provide the sort of sanctions relief that I think they are looking for."

Pressures must be kept in place and even strengthened as new negotiations with the Iranians begin, Netanyahu responded. But the furloughs are making it more difficult to

enforce the sanctions during the budget stalemate.

FinCEN processes tips from banks about suspicious activity and possible money laundering, and shares the data with law enforcement. The network and OFAC are two of the most potent tools the U.S. government has used to pressure Iran.

"Given the fact that the vast majority of FinCEN employees have been furloughed, important pieces of financial intelligence will not be sifted through and analyzed by the agency charged with this task," said Avi Jorisch, a former policy adviser for the Treasury Department's TFI office. The government is shut down, Jorisch said, but "money launderers are certainly not taking vacation."

Mark Dubowitz, executive director of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, said Iran could capitalize on the lack of monitoring and sanctions enforcement to replenish its coffers and advance its nuclear program while no one is looking.

"If the lights are not on, then the Iranians will engage in massive sanctions busting to try to replenish their dwindling foreign exchange reserves," he said. "If you don't have the resources to investigate, identify, and designate the tens of billions of dollars of Iranian regime assets, then you've extended the economic runway of the Iranian regime and increased the likelihood that they could reach nuclear breakout sooner rather than later."

In Congress, top Democrats blame House Republicans for failing to pass a continuing resolution to keep the government running.

"Today, we learn that the Republican shutdown is hurting the Treasury's efforts to implement sanctions against Iran to prevent them from developing a nuclear weapon," Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-NY) told *The Daily Beast*. "This insanity has to stop. We must not allow a few extreme members of the Republican Party to threaten our national security any longer. Speaker Boehner should put a clean bill on the floor and allow an up or down vote on reopening the government today. Any further delay clearly threatens our national security."

Top Republicans involved with Iran sanctions said the administration is to blame for not keeping the Treasury employees at their jobs.

"Enforcing sanctions and stopping illicit financial transactions are core national security missions," Sen. Mark Kirk (R-IL) told *The Daily Beast*. "The administration should not be putting our national security at risk to score political points. All sides need to find common ground and do what's right for the American people."

Treasury officials say they are implementing the shutdown guidelines given to them by the Office of Management and Budget and doing the best they can with limited resources.

"The House Republicans' decision to shut down the government has real consequences, and it goes to our ability to execute our mission, which is integral to protecting our country and advancing our interests," a Treasury Department official said. "We are still enforcing our sanctions, we are still capable of taking action if necessary, but it's a hell of a lot harder and we can't be nearly as nimble and comprehensive as we could be if Congress would pass a clean CR."

Meanwhile, the State Department, which has somehow managed to avoid any significant staff reductions due to the shutdown (articles/2013/09/30/how-the-government-shutdown-hurts-national-security.html), is beginning a new round of negotiations with Iran in conjunction with its partners in the P5+1, set to take place later this month in Geneva (<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/130930/eu-plays-down-deadline-iran-talks-0>).

State Department officials told *The Daily Beast* on Wednesday that the shutdown won't affect those plans.

"Dealing with Iran's nuclear program is an absolute top priority for the State Department, and Undersecretary Wendy Sherman and the State Department team are working hard every day on this issue preparing for the next round of talks in Geneva with Iran and our international partners," said Marie Harf, deputy State Department spokeswoman.

Mr. DURBIN. I yield the floor.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I join with our majority leader who spoke just a moment ago, the majority whip who just spoke so eloquently, as well as our President pro tempore who just spoke, to thank our Capitol Police, Secret Service officers, and all those who responded so courageously yesterday to the situation in the Nation's Capital. We depend on them to be there to do their jobs for all of us. We need to be there to do our jobs as well today.

I thank all of them for doing their jobs, and I plead with our colleagues to do our jobs.

I am so disappointed that we find ourselves again in the morning waking up where the government is shut down, where families and communities across our Nation are feeling the impact today and worried about what the impact will be tomorrow.

I spoke to some small businessmen only a few days ago in my office from the construction industry. The impact on their contracts, lack of contracts or uncertainty about their contracts is affecting their ability—and they are now worried they are going to have to lay off some of their employees because they can't sign contracts when they are so uncertain whether our government is going to be paying our bills in the future.

I met with some Head Start moms a few days ago. I spoke with a young woman who told me this passionate story about being homeless and on the street with a brandnew baby because of an abusive spouse. The Head Start folks in her community found her, found her a shelter, placed her in some education courses about how to be a mom. In 2 years, she is now on her own, working, and back in school because of a government service that was there for her. She didn't plead to me; she pleaded for those other moms or dads who are out there who now face uncertainty and may not have that help in the future.

I have talked to veterans, as the President pro tempore knows, the former chair of the Veterans' Committee, about having worked so hard to make sure our veterans get the services they need as they come home. They are not here pleading for themselves, although they are very worried about whether, as this goes on, they will get the services they need. They are pleading, as veterans always do, so selfless in their service to our Nation, for us to get the government moving again so our country is back on track,

this country that they have so proudly fought for and that people are now hurting.

Today, of course, we are hearing news of a storm, a tropical storm that is approaching our Nation as well.

Families across the South are paying attention to that and they are worried about what a government shutdown or impact might be to them as they face that news on their television and radios this morning. Of course FEMA will be there. They have told us they will be able to call back their furloughed workers. They are prepared to respond to this, as our great Nation always must. But we have to be very concerned about what happens in the future if this government remains shut down—whether there will be reimbursements in a timely fashion, whether cleanup will be able to move forward, and whether there will be an ability to pay for that.

Thousands of members of the National Guard, who have been furloughed, as this approaches us, will need to be called back to get ready for that emergency. Of course, if there is any significant damage—and we all pray there is not, but if there is—cleanup and recovery will likely be impacted because of furloughs at the SBA and at the Department of Transportation. All of our government agencies and government employees who are normally there to respond in a disaster are today not at work, not getting ready, not possibly there in the future, if this shutdown continues.

So I hope for the best for these communities as this storm is threatening. I know our Federal workers will do everything they can to protect these families. We owe it to these communities that are impacted by this storm and to communities across the country to get our government back up and running as quickly as we can, which can happen very fast.

And by the way, Madam President, I will be here later today to talk about the impacts on my State. The impacts of this shutdown are real, and as it continues, so is the uncertainty it produces. Our ability to respond as a Nation to any kind of disaster is a concern for every family.

But I am here today to say it doesn't have to be this way. The answer to this is so simple. As the majority whip just said, there is a bill in the House of Representatives right now, this minute, that is sitting there, and Speaker BOEHNER can simply bring it up for a vote. We know it has the votes to pass. It will say this government will continue to run until November 15, and it will give us the opportunity to then negotiate and to deal with the broader issues that we all know we need to deal with in terms of our budget. But we cannot hold our communities and the future of this country hostage while we negotiate those bills.

So it is so easy. The Speaker can take up this bill, put people back to

work—our government employees, who need to respond to any kind of emergency. Our National Guard will be back at work. Our veterans will not have to worry about payments coming for them, and this will be the country for our fellow countrymen as we always have been—all that, simply by Speaker BOEHNER bringing up a bill that would quickly pass. It would then go to the President, and then this would be over.

I know there has been a lot of talk the past few days about a grand bargain. No one on this floor has worked harder than I have to get us to a budget compromise so we have a path in the future to deal not only with our debt and deficit but also with our deficit in terms of transportation and education and our deficit in terms of our investments that we need to make as a country to be strong in the future. We all know what the sides are on that. We all know we need to come to the table and solve that—that is, the differences we as leaders of this Nation need to address.

I have worked extremely hard on that, and it is time for us to do that. As everyone on this floor knows, we were told by our Republican counterparts and told and told and told the Senate needs to pass a budget. I became budget chair at the beginning of this year. We did our job. Our committee passed a budget. We brought it to the floor. We lived through 5 days of amendments. We brought up every amendment possible and voted on over 100 of them and then we passed that budget. That was the time, 6 months ago, when we should have then said, the House has passed a budget, the Senate has passed a budget, let's go to conference and figure out those differences so we don't end up in this crisis today.

That is the expectation people have of a democracy. Unfortunately, we were told time and again: No, we are not going to allow you to go to conference. So here we are in a crisis. Well, let's address this crisis first. First, let's put people back to work. Let's get our country and our economy moving quickly again, and then allow us to go to conference to deal with those issues that are so critical to this Nation in terms of our fiscal responsibilities and the investments and priorities we need to make as a Nation.

So my plea today is to the Speaker to take up the bill, to allow the country to work again, and then for us to take up our responsibility to find solutions to the disagreements we truly do have as a Nation. I urge my colleagues to urge the Speaker to allow the country to get back to work, and then let's get to the table and let's solve this.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. AYOTTE. Madam President, I want to first thank the Capitol Police for their bravery and for the important work they do in protecting all of us in

the Capitol. Yesterday really showed how important they are. So I want to thank them for everything they did yesterday to make sure people were protected.

This is day 4 of the government shutdown—a shutdown that did not need to happen. I had hoped when I came to the floor a couple of days ago, and when I heard congressional leaders were meeting with the President, at his request, that they would emerge from that meeting with a plan to end this impasse and get the government open again, to come to an agreement as to how we can responsibly fund the government and address the challenges we face as a Nation. But coming out of that meeting, what we got, of course, was a President who said he will not negotiate.

From the beginning, I have said this strategy was an ill-conceived strategy by some Members of my own party who thought that defunding ObamaCare—therefore, shutting down the government—would, No. 1, stop the exchanges from opening. But we knew that was not going to happen. In fact, it has already happened, even though we shut down the government. It was ill conceived because, again, we knew that with the President and the Senate Democrats in charge, they were not going to defund their signature piece of legislation.

As much as I support repealing that piece of legislation—because I have seen the impact already in my own State of New Hampshire, in terms of premiums and in terms of less choice for individuals, and I do believe there is a better way to address health care in this country—where we find ourselves right now is unacceptable for America. It is unacceptable as leaders elected by the people of this country. We owe it to our constituents to resolve this now. Both sides need to get together and we need to resolve this.

I would say to my Republican colleagues in the House and to some in this Chamber, it is time for a reality check. Defunding ObamaCare did not work as a strategy, so let's find common ground and work together, yes, to address the very legitimate concerns we have with this health care bill, but also to get this government funded. I would say to my Democratic colleagues here in the Senate and to the President, come to the table and negotiate. Let's work this out on behalf of the American people. I will say it again: I think where we are is the result of an ill-conceived strategy by many in my party, leading to an immature response that says we will not negotiate and talk and try to work this out on behalf of the American people.

We all know the American people are the ones suffering the most from this shutdown. I have heard it from our guardsmen in New Hampshire who have been forced to go to the unemployment office, Federal employees who wonder whether they will be able to pay their mortgages, furloughed civilian workers

in New Hampshire at one of our proudest military installations in this country, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, and small business owners who can't get the help they need from the Small Business Administration. They deserve better than this.

I hope, as we head into this weekend, the President, the leaders of the House, the leaders of the Senate will get together, and that we will get behind them on behalf of the American people, to get this government open, to resolve our differences, to find common ground and do the people's business.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. RUBIO. First, let me also start, Madam President, by thanking the men and women of the Capitol Police and the District of Columbia and the Secret Service. It reminds us they are the thin blue line standing between us and danger. This is a moment to extend our thanks to all law enforcement and first responders around the country who, on a daily basis, are on that thin blue line as well. So we are all grateful for what you do for us and how you keep us safe.

I wanted to talk, of course, about this week. It has been an interesting week, to say the least, beyond the events of yesterday. When we turn on the cable news, it features these countdown clocks leading up to the government slowdown. Now, in the aftermath of it, we see the countdown about how many days we have been into this thing.

Look, there is no doubt this impasse we are at is a problem for the country. This is not the best way to run the most important government in the world.

There are people around here who all they do is focus on politics. For them, every day is election day. They are focused on who is winning, who is going to get the blame, and who is this going to help in the next election. I suppose that has a place in politics and in the governing process. But let me answer the question: Who will get the blame? We all are. Every single one of us in the House, the Senate, and in the entire Federal Government will get the blame.

And let me tell you why. Because there are people who woke up this morning who didn't get enough sleep last night. Maybe they were up late helping their kids with their homework. They got up, guzzled a bunch of coffee and forced themselves to work. They didn't want to work. They were tired. But they had to. And they are going to work today, and they are going to get home and go through all that again. And they are wondering: Why can't you guys do that? Why can't you do your job? I think that is a very valid frustration that people have with this process and with those of us here today.

I am not happy about some of the things we have seen this week or over

the last couple of weeks. I think it is very unfortunate—some of the rhetoric that has been used around here, both in this Chamber and in the public domain. But each day that goes by, what I am more and more worried about may not be what everybody else, or at least too many people here, are worried about. See, I think it is wrong that those of us who stand on principle, who believe, for example, ObamaCare is going to badly damage our economy—I think it is wrong we have a Congressman from my home State who compares us to the Taliban. We have a spokesperson for the White House who says we are like people with bombs strapped to our chests. I think that is wrong.

I think it is wrong too by the way, that the President has used the megaphone of the Presidency not to bring Americans together but to deepen these divisions. Mr. President, you are not the chairman of the Democratic party. You are the President of the United States. Act like the President of the United States. Rise above that stuff. Your job is to bring this Nation together. I know people are going to say things about you that you don't like. It comes with the territory. You have to rise above it. And I hope he will.

But those are not the things that concern me the most. What I am most worried about is that this country faces a very serious crisis, and we are running out of time to fix it. There is no doubt this government slowdown is not good, but it is not the crisis I am referring to. This issue about hitting the debt limit is a problem, but that is not the most serious crisis we face either. The single most important crisis we face in this country is that for millions of Americans the promise of the American dream is literally slipping through their fingers. With all the focus around here on whatever the crisis of the day may be, I fear we are simply not spending enough time focusing on that reality.

It reminds me of a story I know. A few years ago, a friend of mine in Florida was on a twin-engine airplane flying from one part of the State to another. At some point during that flight, a fire broke out in the cockpit. That fire was a problem. But the bigger problem was that both of the pilots started to put out the fire, and no one was flying the plane. Within a few seconds, the plane began to plunge, and it lost hundreds of feet of altitude. Luckily, they figured it out quickly and were able to correct it. But they were so focused on the fire in the cockpit, they weren't flying the plane. Luckily, they realized in time if they didn't start flying that plane that fire was going to be pretty insignificant for them in just a few seconds.

So we have a government slowdown, and this government slowdown is a problem, yes. We have the upcoming debt limit issue, and that is a problem, yes. But the fire in our cockpit and the one we need to address is the erosion of the American dream.

If we think the slowdown of government is problematic, that is a vote away from being solved. All we have to do is take a vote in either Chamber and we can solve that problem. But the slowdown in government is going to be a big problem when this government no longer has enough money to pay its bills, and if we keep doing what we are doing now, that is going to happen.

We think this debt limit situation is a problem? That is one vote away from being solved. When it is going to be a real problem is when no one wants to buy our debt anymore because they don't think we can pay them back.

We think all this division and dysfunction in Washington is bad for our economy? Yes. But what is worse is a tax code that kills jobs, regulations that on a daily basis are killing jobs, and a national debt that is killing jobs. By the way, one of the greatest destroyers of jobs in America today is ObamaCare, and that is why we are so passionate about it.

The American dream—which people throw around so loosely as a term—is basically the notion that no matter where you start out in life, no matter how many obstacles you have to overcome, you have the God-given right, through hard work and perseverance, to achieve a better life and leave your children better off than yourself. But it is being eroded on a daily basis, and not nearly enough attention is being paid to that. I don't see any countdown clocks on cable television about the American dream.

The most dangerous thing happening in Washington today is that everyone is so busy fighting about the problems before us today that there doesn't seem to be enough focus on the crisis we are headed to pretty soon; that we are on the verge of losing the American dream. I say that because, to one extent or another, we are all guilty of misplacing that focus.

So my speech here today as much as anything else is a reminder to me of why I wanted to serve here. The reason I wanted to serve here is because I know—I don't think; I know—that America is special. I know this partially because I was raised by and around people who know what life is like in places other than America. In places other than America, you can only go as far as your parents went. You are trapped. Whatever your family did is the only thing you are allowed to do by those societies.

But we have been different, and I have seen it with my own eyes. Both in my neighborhood and in my family, I have seen people who came here with little education and no connections and through hard work and perseverance achieve a better life, achieve a meaningful life, and leave their kids better off than themselves. I also see how every single day there are millions of people out there now trying to achieve the same thing, and they are finding it harder and harder to do that. We are on the verge of losing that. If we lose that,

every day that is eroded, so too is the exceptionalism of this country. People love to use that term, an "exceptional nation," and I believe it is exceptional, but it is exceptional primarily because of the American dream.

Many countries in the world have powerful militaries. Every country in the world has rich people and big companies. What makes us different is that here, if you are willing to work hard, if you have a really good idea, you can be rewarded for it with a better life. That is eroding. If we lose that, we lose what makes us special and different, and no one seems to be fighting enough about that.

The only reason all these other issues matter is because they relate to the American dream. The reason the debt really matters is because it undermines the American dream. The reason our Tax Code, which is broken, matters is because it undermines the American dream. The reason I am so passionate about ObamaCare is because for millions of people it is undermining the ability to achieve the American dream.

The reason I ran for office is because as a country we are headed in the wrong direction because we are losing the American dream. We still have time to fix this, but we don't have all century. We don't even have all decade. We have to begin to take these issues seriously or we will be known as the first generation of Americans who lost the American dream and left our children worse off than ourselves.

We still have time to refocus ourselves. With all this noise about politics and who gets the blame and who is responsible for what, I hope we can use these challenges before us as a catalyst to begin to focus on these issues and why they matter. They matter because they are hurting people, and they are hurting people who are trying to achieve a better life. If we do that, if we focus on that and if we solve the problems before us with an eye toward that, then I think we will have the real opportunity to do what every generation of Americans before us has done: to leave our children better off than ourselves and to leave for them what our parents left for us—the single greatest Nation in the history of the world.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I come to the floor again today to talk about the effects of this government shutdown that are being experienced in New Hampshire. As I begin, let me start where a number of my colleagues have this morning, and that is by thanking the Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police for the great job they did yesterday, and particularly the Capitol Police, who are willing to put their lives on the line, as we say frequently, every day to protect us, but in this case where they are doing that and they are not getting paid, that is certainly a tribute to the commitment

and the dedication they have to this Congress and to this government.

I hope that as Members of the Senate and as Members of Congress, we will take inspiration from that dedication and recommit to trying to end this government shutdown and end the negative impacts it is having on people across this country. We are just 4 days into the shutdown—this is day No. 4—but every day we see more and more of the effects it is having across the country and in my home State of New Hampshire.

My colleague Senator AYOTTE was on the floor earlier talking about some of the frustrations people are experiencing as a result of the shutdown. As I said earlier this week, hundreds of Air National Guard civilian employees have already been furloughed. We have Portsmouth Naval Shipyard workers who are facing furlough. We have new SBA loan originations that have come to a halt, so businesses aren't able to get the capital they need. So many other important services and so many other people are being affected.

I really wanted to talk today a little more in-depth about the effect of the shutdown on one of New Hampshire's national treasures, the White Mountain National Forest.

This time of year the Kancamagus Highway in the White Mountains really starts to see bumper-to-bumper traffic. You might not expect traffic jams in a remote location like that in the middle of the mountains, but when tourists come in to see the beautiful fall foliage in New Hampshire, it really is a boon to New Hampshire's economy, and they are everywhere.

New Hampshire's director of travel and tourism, Lori Harnois, estimates that about 7.8 million people will come to New Hampshire between September and the end of November, which is 2 percent higher than last year. According to Lori, more than spending time, these visitors will spend over \$1 billion, which is about 3 percent more than was spent last year. That is why this season is so critical for the small businesses in New Hampshire that depend on the tourism industry. This is really about the economics of New Hampshire and the ability of so many of our small businesses and their owners and employees to survive throughout the year. Local stores, restaurants, and attractions rely on this season to meet their bottom lines.

Many tourists coming to New Hampshire visit our Federal forest lands in the White Mountain National Forest. Those lands are administered by the U.S. Forest Service. The White Mountain National Forest stretches over 800,000 acres in New Hampshire and Maine, and it is one of the most visited outdoor recreation sites in all of United States, with nearly 6 million visitors a year. More visitors than go to Yellowstone or Yosemite Parks come and visit the White Mountains of New Hampshire. For everyone who has been there or visited one of the many

landmarks in the forest, it is no surprise because its natural beauty has kept visitors coming back for centuries. Given its proximity to cities such as Boston and Montreal, it is a great place to bring families. Nearly 60 million people in the United States alone live within 1 day's drive of the White Mountain National Forest.

Unfortunately, this year, during the busiest few weeks of the year, tourists are going to be shut out of important services because of this unnecessary government shutdown. Restrooms for families in bumper-to-bumper traffic will be closed along the highways and trails in the national forest. Garbage collection is going to be suspended. Campgrounds will be closed starting over the next few days. Families looking to camp in the White Mountains will have to find new lodging or change their plans.

Ongoing repairs to bridges and roads in response to Hurricane Irene—we are still cleaning up as a result of the damage from Hurricane Irene—those projects are going to be put on hold, and only a few staff members are going to still be there to respond to emergencies, conduct repairs, and help direct people.

This is leading to a frustrating experience for tourists, and it is frustrating for all of the businesses that depend on the people who come to visit. The shutdown could really hurt a very important industry in New Hampshire at a critical time.

All told, about 120 employees for the White Mountains have been told to stay home until Congress reaches a budget agreement. And as we have heard here in Washington, as we know from our own staffs, these employees have done nothing to deserve these furloughs. They have worked hard, they have been dedicated, but they are going to have to try to make ends meet because Congress can't get its act together. No wonder people are outraged.

Our Federal forest lands are not only critical drivers of the tourism industry, they support New Hampshire's timber industry. If this shutdown continues, the Forest Service will have to determine whether to suspend existing contracts for timber-harvesting on Federal lands, and these companies will have to shut down their operations at one of the best times to harvest timber. So the impact will also be on all of those people who work in the timber industry and depend on that industry for their livelihood.

I wish to highlight some of these effects because we need to remind ourselves just what this government shutdown means for the people who are being hurt, what it means for the small businesses and their employees, and what it means to the economy in my State of New Hampshire and the economy across the country. We are clearly seeing the effects of the shutdown in New Hampshire. If we don't act, these effects will become more and more severe every day.

I hope we can begin to see talks going on between Members of the House and Senate. I hope those who are holding up the continuing resolution in the House—the legislation that would get this country operating again—will reconsider. All it takes is the Speaker to bring that legislation to the floor. He keeps saying we haven't negotiated. In fact, we have negotiated. We negotiated for over 1 year before we passed the Affordable Care Act. We negotiated before this continuing resolution was agreed to, and the Senate, in fact, accepted the numbers, the cost of that continuing resolution to keep the government open. We thought our numbers were better, but we accepted the House numbers because we wanted to try to negotiate and reach an agreement. Unfortunately, what we have seen is that the House has reneged on that agreement.

It is now time to bring that legislation to the floor, to get this government operating again, and to end the negative impact and the real hardship so many people across this country are experiencing.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, in Vermont and all over this country there is profound anger and disgust at what is going on here in Washington. The reason is that today we remain in a significant and very serious economic downturn. Real unemployment is close to 14 percent. Over 20 million workers are unemployed. And what the American people are saying as loudly and as clearly as they can is, Congress, we want you to create millions of decent-paying jobs. All over this country, people are struggling with wages of \$9 or \$10 a hour. What the American people are saying to Congress is: Congress, Mr. President, we want you to raise the minimum wage.

In the midst of a serious economic crisis, the American people want us to act to improve the economy, to create jobs, to raise wages. But what are we doing today? We are saying to 800,000 hard-working Federal employees: Don't come in to work. We don't know when and if you are going to be paid. We are saying to 1.2 million other Federal employees who are at work: Thank you very much for coming in to your job today. Thank you for your work as a Capitol Hill police officer or FBI agent or somebody in the CIA or somebody working at Head Start or somebody delivering meals to low-income senior citizens, thank you all very much for your work but we don't know when and if you will be paid.

What we are doing right now is the exact opposite of what the American people want. They want us to create jobs and raise wages. What we are saying to 2 million American workers is: You are not getting paid. Some of you are furloughed. Some of you are coming in.

These Federal employees are not millionaires. They are hard-working, middle-class Americans. They are struggling as is everybody else in this country to pay their mortgages, to send their kids to college, to afford childcare, to do what other middle-class families need to do. We are putting all of them under extreme anxiety today. In an unstable, volatile economy, that is not what we should be doing.

In addition, this shutdown is having a very negative impact on the entire economy. The estimate is that we are losing about \$10 billion a week as a result of the government shutdown, according to Goldman Sachs. If the government is shut down for 3 weeks, the economy will lose over \$36 billion. Moody's has estimated if the shutdown lasts 4 weeks, it will drain \$55 billion from the economy.

Does any sane person believe that when our economy today has so many problems—when we are just beginning to recover from the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression, when we were losing 700,000 jobs a month, when we are trying to get our feet on the ground economically—does anybody think it makes sense to not be paying over 2 million workers and to be losing billions and billions of dollars in the economy as a result of the shutdown?

This is the start of the flu season. Every fall the Centers for Disease Control closely monitors the spread of flu and directs vaccines to where they are needed the most. But because of the shutdown, the CDC is today unable to support the annual seasonal influenza program. Does that make sense to anybody? We are endangering the health and the lives of millions of Americans because of the shutdown of the CDC.

During the shutdown the Food and Drug Administration is stopping most of its food safety operations. We have seen over the years outbreaks of salmonella and other types of food problems. Does anyone think it makes sense to shut down the FDA?

Most of the Department of Labor is closed. Ironically, we are supposed to be receiving a report from the Department of Labor telling us what kind of unemployment rate we now have, but we cannot get that because they are shut down.

The WIC Program, Women, Infants, and Children nutrition program, is being shut down. This is a program that provides good nutrition to low-income pregnant women and their babies so that the mothers and the babies will be healthy in these critical times in their lives. We want healthy children in this country. We don't want to see children die at birth. That is what the WIC Program is about.

Social Security services are being delayed. In Burlington, VT, where I live, there was a rally yesterday. Social Security workers are being furloughed. Others are working without pay. We owe it to the seniors in this country

that when they are eligible for Social Security and they apply for Social Security their papers are processed in a timely manner. That is what they are due.

Head Start Programs for thousands of lower income kids are starting to close. Today Head Start provides education, health, nutrition, and other services to roughly 1 million children throughout our country. The Wall Street Journal reported yesterday on the impact the shutdown is already having. Four Head Start Programs that offer preschool activities for 3,200 children in Florida, Connecticut, Alabama, and Mississippi have closed and officials said 11 other programs would be shut down by week's end if Federal funding is not restored. Does any sane person believe we should be shutting down Head Start Programs at a time when preschool education is so important? We all understand that.

And it is so hard to come by. What we are telling parents today is next week you may not be able to bring your kids into a Head Start Program. How does that impact your employment? What do you do with your kid? Does anybody around here care about that?

The United States is the only nation in the industrialized world that does not guarantee health care to all people. Today we have about 48 million people with no health insurance. ObamaCare, to my mind, is not a solution to the problem but it is a step forward. We are talking about 20, maybe 25 million people who are in desperate need of health insurance being able to get that insurance; others who are paying more than they can afford perhaps getting insurance that is more affordable to them. We should be going farther in terms of health care, but for rightwing Republicans in the House of Representatives to be saying we are going to keep this government shut down until we deny millions of people the health care based on legislation that we passed is inexcusable. It is not acceptable.

The point I think many of my colleagues made and everybody agrees with now—this is not in debate and the American people have to understand this—No. 1, the Senate passed a continuing resolution that in my view simply underfunds many of the programs out there. I am not happy about that bill. It should be much higher than that. It is not a good bill, but it was passed. Everybody understands that if Speaker BOEHNER chose to be the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and not the Speaker of the Republican Party, and if he brought that bill that we passed here in the Senate on the floor this morning, there is no debate, they have the votes. The Democrats and moderate Republicans and maybe more would vote for that legislation and government could be reopened this afternoon. The Speaker there has an issue he has to deal with. He has to understand that he represents all this country and not just an extreme rightwing faction.

I hope very much the Speaker will do the right thing, bring that to the floor, and reopen the government.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I want to follow up briefly first on the comments of Senator SANDERS. We have a continuing resolution over there. The annualized cut is \$70 billion. Usually when you compromise, one side gives a little, the other side gives a little. On this continuing resolution that passed out of this body, we took their numbers. Compromise means you take a little bit from both sides. We took 100 percent the numbers from the House, a \$70 billion annualized cut. That is what we took. So to people who keep saying we are not negotiating, we did. As a matter of fact, we went much farther than many of us wanted. We did it because we wanted to keep the government open.

So let's not get fooled by some of the political speeches they are making on the floor or over there, outside in the courtyard. We met their annualized reductions—they wanted \$70 billion—with this continuing resolution. When they sent bills over here we have voted on them. They have not prevailed on their side, but we have voted on them.

We sent the bill over there. It is sitting. We know by public statements by many Republicans and Democrats over there, they are ready to vote on this bill, a clean CR, continuing resolution, to keep the government open.

What is amazing about this is we are debating this. What we should be getting back to—I know the chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Senator MIKULSKI, would—as a member of the Appropriations Committee we would like to get back to appropriations, annual bills. Then we would not be in this start-and-stop deal that I think the American people are fed up with, this manufactured crisis that a few over in the House used to set us up in a situation where we create more uncertainty in the family, more uncertainty with small businesses, more uncertainty with individuals in the Federal Government on furlough. Eighty percent of my staff is on furlough. Every day they are on furlough I donate my salary. I am doing my part because we should not be exempt from this situation. But at the same time we have to recognize the impact it is having to our economy.

I get it; they are passionate about their view on the Affordable Health Care Act. They do not like it, some of them over there. Some of them also said we should work to fix it. I proposed multiple solutions and ideas how we can move forward on that. But to hold up the economy, hold up the budget over this issue is ridiculous. I don't like No Child Left Behind. I hate it. For Alaska it doesn't work. It destroyed many efforts in our rural communities. But to hold up the government over that? I am going to work to fix it, and if I can't fix it I am going to

vote against the reauthorization. That is the right that we have here. But they are playing, as I called it last night, Russian roulette economics, and the American people are on the back end. It is shameful.

We have to get back to doing what we should be doing, annualized appropriations bills, create certainty in our economy, create certainty in our government, focus on this economy that has moved, for 4 or 5 years now, from this recession, a great recession. It is a slow climb out, but it is in the right direction. Let's keep it moving in that direction with the right kind of policies.

In my State, winter is setting in. The Low-Income Housing Assistance Program is critical for Alaskans who are living in areas where their income is not able to purchase the energy they need to supply their house with winter heat, and they depend on the Low-Income Housing Assistance Program. It is not about some fluff program or some luxury program. It is for them life or death. If you cannot heat your home in Alaska when it is 30 below, you may not survive. It is that simple.

I said earlier I think the Members on the other side clearly understand that we have to get the government running, and there are Members on both sides who are ready to do that over there if the Speaker would just put it on the table so people could vote on it. If it fails, we go back to negotiations. My bet is it will not fail. Because it passed here. People forget the cloture vote here, the vote to move the bill forward here in the Senate passed 99 to 0. I am not sure when that happened recently around this place, but we did it—after great passionate speeches by some, but we did it. We debated it, we moved the bill over because it was the right thing to do. Again, reminding people, we met the House numbers. We didn't lift our numbers up or down, we went all the way down to their number—\$70 billion in cuts in annualized savings—annualized cuts to the Federal budget on this 6-week or so continuing resolution.

In Anchorage—a columnist just wrote about it—we estimate about 13,000 Federal workers are in some form impacted by this, laid off or impacted because they are working longer hours with no pay.

I want to detail a couple of examples in Alaska where it is impacting. Take this Federal worker who has now been furloughed. They are in the midst of remodeling their home. I got this call. Everything stopped. The contractors who are expecting to get paid are not getting paid. The contractor working for the employee who was remodeling their home—that will not happen because of the uncertainty. His comment was, I thought, pretty clear: Life doesn't stop just because Congress says you can't come to work anymore.

Life continues, and these costs pile up.

In my State, the Bering Sea crab fishery—many people see this on the

TV show the "Deadliest Catch"—is worth about \$80 million a year. The amount of crab they can catch is determined by NOAA Fisheries and the State of Alaska.

Crab season starts October 15. If they do not have these quotas set, then making sure that the process is safe and the product is exactly what people expect when they get it on their plate to eat or at the grocery store—the problem is those employees are furloughed, so the quota will not be set. As a result, the permits they need to catch the crab will not happen, and the end result is a multimillion-dollar hit—and not to some government employee.

I heard people criticize the bureaucrats. Well, not only are 1 million or so employees furloughed across this country, but now it is affecting second and third options. In this case it is the crab industry, which will affect people all over this country and people all over the world. Again, we have delay after delay.

Alaska receives about \$1.2 billion from the Federal payroll every single year. A lengthy disruption will have an incredible fiscal impact to our State and will trickle out because these folks travel. I see my colleague from Washington State. We have lots of people who go to Seattle, WA. They may not take that trip and spend in that economy because they are afraid of what might happen with this stop-and-go situation.

We are now about to move forward—after decades of waiting—on the National Petroleum Reserve for oil and gas exploration. What does it take? It is a Federal Reserve so it takes Federal permits. Without the Federal permits, it cannot happen or it gets delayed, and it is costly.

When we look at the issues and the calls I have received, it is all the way from an elder in the Artic Circle who said: Please, get the people back to work. It has a direct impact, not only on Alaskans, but on people all across this country.

There has been a lot of great debate. Yesterday, I saw a press conference given by a small group of the minority over there who said they were concerned about the National Institutes of Health. I am concerned about the National Institutes of Health. I can tell you story after story of how those medicines are critical for young people and adults. What they failed to mention was the billions they have already cut. They forgot that little detail. Amnesia is like a prerequisite for some Members around here, and they forgot that little detail. It's amazing to me.

I will mention again—because I believe the public has not heard this enough because they say over there that we are not negotiating—we have negotiated with them. We have taken their numbers and have gone down by \$70 billion in annualized cuts. We have taken them for this continuing resolution. Every time they sent something

over here, we voted on it. They may not have liked the vote outcome, but we voted on it.

We sent one continuing resolution over there. We also have the farm bill, the immigration bill, and the WRDA bill. It has not piled up over there because they have not taken action. They would rather play party politics and figure out what elections they can win or lose rather than focus on what is important for the American people, and for my constituency, specifically, in Alaska that I represent.

I hope we end this debate, get on with business, and re-open the government. Let's negotiate. They have some ideas to fix the health care act. I am happy to talk with them. I have several bills I have introduced, but I never have heard from them over there. As a matter of fact, I know they mentioned my name over there quite a bit. I have seen it on TV. The House somehow recognizes that I have some influence, and I do in some ways. If they want to have a conversation, I'm game. Pick up the phone or walk across the Capitol.

Let's be real: The continuing resolution is about managing our budget and putting people back to work so we can keep this economy moving and get on with the big issues that we have to deal with. If they want to fix the health care act, I am happy to sit down with Members. If they want to move the immigration bill, I am happy to work with folks. We can go through the list.

Let's not hold the American people hostage for a simple situation. If they were to put it on the floor, it would pass. I would bet on it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, yesterday we had a hearing in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, as the Presiding Officer knows. We had testimony by Secretary Sherman as to the enforcement of sanctions against Iran in order to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear weapon state, which would be a game changer.

During the course of that hearing, it came out that as a result of the government shutdown, we are not as effective as we could be. There is always more that can be done in working with other countries, and the shutdown is affecting our full preparedness for enforcing the sanctions internationally against Iran.

One of my colleagues started to challenge the representative from the State Department as to why they couldn't do more. Of course, it was the Treasury Department's budget that was primarily affecting the attention to this. The Secretary assured us that we are enforcing our sanctions.

Senator Kaine made the observation—and the right observation—don't blame the administration; blame the Congress. It is the Congress that has the responsibility to make sure the government is functioning with all cylinders. This tea party shutdown is

jeopardizing our national security. It is not putting us where we should be as far as taking care of the needs of the people of this country.

I was on the floor a couple of days ago, and I quoted from the Baltimore Sun as to the responsibility for the shutdown, and I'm going to quote a little bit more from that article. It said:

It would be tempting, of course, to write that this impasse—the inability to agree on the continuing resolution to fund government past the end of the fiscal year—was the fault of Democrats and Republicans alike. But that would be like blaming the hostages for causing the perpetrator to put a gun to their heads.

As President Obama noted, he and congressional Democrats put forward no agenda other than keeping government operating temporarily at the current levels.

I want to review how we got here on October 1. It was 6 months ago that the Senate passed the budget. It was different than the House budget. Then, we, the Democrats said: Let's go to conference. That is what we should do, negotiate a budget, so that when it comes to October 1, we have a budget in place to fund government at the levels we agreed to—Democrats and Republicans. The Republicans refused to go to conference.

Fast forward to October 1. We didn't have a budget, and, therefore, it was necessary to pass a continuing resolution. That is what you do. When we can't pass a budget, we keep government operating at the current levels until we can agree on a budget. So that is what we decided to do, but we went further. The majority leader met with the Speaker of the House, and rather than negotiating about what level we thought should be in the continuing resolution—what the Democrats and the Republicans thought—we went along with the lower number. We negotiated the continuing resolution at the lower level, and that is what we passed.

The Republicans in the House decided they would not go for that, and they attached their changes in the health care system as a condition to passing a continuing resolution. Make no mistake about it; it is a tea party shutdown.

Now the Republicans are saying to us: Why aren't we negotiating? Well, let me quote from this morning's editorial in the Baltimore Sun. I think this morning's editorial really captures where we are as far as negotiations. The headline says:

There is no room to "negotiate" when extremists take the federal government hostage—and threaten to do the same to the economy.

How can the tea partiers in the House expect to be offered anything for doing the equivalent of strapping C-4 and a detonator to their chests and holding the government hostage?

The editorial goes on to say:

Reward these tactics and you'll only see more of it in Congress. And that's critically important given that the stakes are about to rise. Should Republicans engage in similar behavior with the debt ceiling, they risk not only the health of the U.S. economy but the

global economy. To default on the debt—to refuse to pay bills already incurred by the federal government—has the potential to pull the nation back into recession and put thousands, if not millions, of people out of work.

It is very clear: We have compromised, and the tea party Republicans have shut down government. We can't negotiate with a gun to our head. It reminds me of a football team that played a game and didn't like the results, so they say: Let's just play that game all over.

Last Sunday the Baltimore Ravens didn't play a very good game. They lost. They didn't say: Let's play that game over. They are going to be here this weekend playing again and trying to improve their record.

I heard one of my colleagues use another sports analogy. He said we could do a mulligan on ObamaCare. We are the big leagues. There are no mulligans at the U.S. Open. There are no mulligans in golf. Let's use the regular order.

Yes, we want to negotiate a budget for the next year, but we can't do it with a gun at our head and say: Open government and pay our bills.

Then the Republicans are saying: Well, let's do this piecemeal. Why don't we just take up small provisions.

This is another quote from this morning's Baltimore Sun:

Even the little fixes the GOP is offering is outrageous if they slow down the return of a fully-funded government. Reopening parks would be great, but what about cancer patients denied treatment? And for every National Institutes of Health reopened, what about the funding for inspectors that are making sure our food isn't tainted, or intelligence officers monitoring the next al-Qaida attack, or FDA scientists reviewing the next miracle drug? It's impossible to even keep track of all of the hardships the shutdown has created, and why do so when the solution is at hand?

This shutdown is hard on our country. My colleagues have talked about it. It has affected our welfare, it has put our Nation at risk, and it has hurt our economy—including my own State of Maryland. Senator MIKULSKI is here, and she will be speaking as chairman of the Appropriations Committee. The State of Maryland loses \$15 million every day in our State economy.

We literally have over 100,000 workers who are on furlough and not getting paid, and it is costing the taxpayers money. The last shutdown in 1995 cost \$2 billion. What a waste of taxpayers' resources.

Let us put an end to this tea party shutdown. Let us also assure those who are on furlough that they will get paid. I have introduced legislation in this regard. I believe the House is going to be passing that legislation. Let's make it clear that our Federal workers—who have endured 3 years of pay freezes, furloughs under sequestration, and have been asked to do more with less—will be made whole when this shutdown ends.

Let's put an end to the shutdown and make sure we pay our bills. Let's meet

together to work out a budget for the coming year, as we should.

The tragedy here is that the votes are in the House of Representatives to pass the Senate continuing resolution. If Speaker BOEHNER would just vote on the resolution we sent over, the shutdown would end and we could get on with the business of this Nation.

I yield the floor

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I intended to give remarks and then promulgate a series of unanimous consent requests. However, the majority leader requested, for purposes of scheduling, that I begin with the unanimous consent requests, which I am happy to do to accommodate his schedule. I ask that at the conclusion of these unanimous consent requests, I be given 20 minutes to speak to lay out the reasons why I believe the majority should cede to these unanimous consent requests.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—
H.J. RES. 72

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.J. Res. 72, making continuing appropriations for veterans' benefits for the fiscal year 2014, which was received from the House.

I ask further consent that the measure be read three times and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, the junior Senator from Texas has offered a unanimous consent request that we take care of veterans in this shutdown of government. I would note that there is no Senator or Member of Congress who does not care deeply about making sure our veterans are taken care of, including this Senator from the State of Washington.

As the Presiding Officer knows and our colleagues know, I have spoken often of my own father who was a World War II veteran and who spent most of his life in a wheelchair and received a Purple Heart. I know the sacrifices our veterans make.

As chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee previously, I fought to make sure every veteran had what they need, to make sure we said more than just thank you but provided them what they need. So I know our veterans well.

What I also know about our veterans is that they, above everyone else, are suffering. They went to serve our country and said we will take care of the rest of you at our own personal sacrifice. They would be the last to come before us and say, Take care of me before everyone else. They would say to