

to fund the government until Republicans relented and passed a cap-and-trade bill. Can you imagine. That is not how our democracy works, it is not what our Founders envisioned, and it is not compromise. It is extortion.

It is our job to pass a spending bill every year. We can fight about how big that bill is. We can fight about how small that bill is going to be. But constitutional duty is not optional. Some are saying there needs to be further compromise on the spending bill, but it is clear that sometimes the Republican House does not know when to declare a victory. They actually got the spending levels they asked for. In the interests of keeping the government open, the Senate accepted House spending levels, sequester levels, in our funding resolution. I do not like those spending levels. Most Democrats do not support those spending levels. But we are not willing to risk the entire economy or well-being of our constituents just to get our way.

The bottom line is this: It is time to reopen the government—no strings attached, no policy riders, and no more hostage-taking, just a clean funding bill that stops hurting our public servants, our communities, and our economy, a clean funding resolution that keeps the lights on while we negotiate over a long-term budget. The Senate had the votes to pass such a bill, and we did. The House also has the votes to pass a clean funding bill, but Speaker BOEHNER will not bring it to the floor. He will not put it up for a vote because the most extreme Members of his caucus want to play hostage politics instead.

It is time to end this. It is time to drop the hostage politics and simply pass the one plan that has the votes to pass both Chambers—a clean funding bill.

Speaker BOEHNER, let them vote. Let your Members vote their conscience on a clean funding resolution. It is your duty, Mr. Speaker. Just let them vote. That is all we ask.

I yield.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the period of morning business be extended until 4 p.m. and that all provisions of the previous order remain in effect.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, my good friend the Senator from Alabama has graciously agreed to let us flip the order, so I am going to now, before he does, ask unanimous consent that be done and that it not change the alternating pattern, Republican and Democrat.

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

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I rise to talk about an aspect of the tea party government shutdown that has not gotten the attention it deserves. Sadly, the effects of this tea party shutdown do not stop at our water's edge. The shutdown is putting our national security at risk. The senior Senator from California, the chair of the Intelligence Committee, has talked to us about how 72 percent of our intelligence employees are not working. They are not all useless or laggards or slackers. In fact, there is a high degree of professionalism in the CIA, NSA, and like agencies. To have close to three-quarters of them not on the job puts every American at risk.

There is another area that is putting us at risk. We all know that the greatest threat to our national security and to that of Israel—or one of the greatest threats to our national security and the greatest threat to Israel is a nuclear Iran. In order to punish Iran for their pursuit of nuclear weapons, Republicans and Democrats, in a bipartisan way, led in many instances by two of my good friends here, the Democratic senior Senator from New Jersey Mr. MENENDEZ and the Republican senior Senator from South Carolina Mr. GRAHAM—they have come together to pass tough sanctions that would have a crippling effect on Iran's economy, and this body in a bipartisan way and the other body in a bipartisan way have passed those.

Just last week we saw some of the first results and progress, as President Ruhani said he was open to talks on the nuclear program. Iran had been intransigent before that. We don't even know if they really want to give up nuclear weapons or whether this is a feint, but we certainly know the sanctions are having a dramatic effect. What has changed Iran's mind? Have they suddenly had a change of heart out of the blue? No. The only thing that changed their minds is the sanctions, and that is why they are at least acting differently than they have acted in the past. Who knows. Hopefully they may actually do something real if the sanctions continue. We know that these tough sanctions are a huge weight around the ankles of the Iranian economy.

But right now, when Iran feels cornered for the first time, the shutdown of our government could well take that pressure off the Iranians, and it comes at exactly the wrong time. That is because the shutdown and its concomitant furloughs are preventing us from fully enforcing the sanctions, allowing the companies that are trying to do business with Iran to escape punishment and allowing the Iranian economy to expand faster than it normally would have. There are many companies that try to evade these sanctions, but the Federal Government has cops on the beat who have been, by and large, overwhelmingly successful in making sure nobody can slip through the

cracks and do business with Iran. But now, because of the government shutdown and furloughs, those offices are greatly weakened.

Two of the major offices in the Treasury Department that enforce sanctions—the Office of Intelligence and Analysis and the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network—have only 30 of their 345 employees. Let me repeat that. Two of the most important offices that enforce sanctions have less than 10 percent of their employees. Ninety percent-plus are on furlough. They cannot work.

The Office of Terrorist Financing and Intelligence—a vital part of our enforcing tough sanctions against Iran—is usually staffed by 10 people. Right now they just have one—10 percent.

The Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control—the primary office responsible for enforcing these sanctions and punishing those who violate them—is also operating with a skeleton staff.

Just at a time when we need the sanctions to continue to bite, this government shutdown is making it a lot easier for rogue actors to sell oil and trade with the Iranian regime. We all know that those who try to avoid sanctions find the weakest place. Now, with so few of our people on the job because of the shutdown, it is going to be a lot easier for them. New sanctions designations will halt. We will not be able to investigate sanction violations. We cannot punish those who have violated the sanctions. The government shutdown sends a dramatic and strong signal to those who seek to violate the sanctions and give the Iranian regime hope that they can continue to keep nuclear weapons. It could not come at a worse time. The Iranian sanctions have been our best pressure point, and the shutdown is letting the pressure off Iran at exactly the wrong time.

We have seen a pattern over the last few days, and I have a feeling I know what the response from the other side of the aisle—particularly the junior Senator from Texas—will be. He will say: OK, Democrats, that is a good point. Let's fund the sanctions, and maybe tomorrow or the next day we will have a bill on the floor to restore those offices in the Treasury Department. Then maybe we will point out that the government shutdown is hurting middle-class students from getting college loans. Again, that was something that had bipartisan support. Then maybe the junior Senator from Texas or House Republicans will say: OK. Let's fund it too. After a while, it gets a little ridiculous.

The House Republicans, and their seeming acquiescence to the junior Senator from Texas, have given the junior Senator from Texas a veto power over which parts of the Federal Government are funded and which are not. At the request of the junior Senator from Texas—who has fervently and passionately said don't fund the government unless ObamaCare is

eliminated—the House Republicans have shut down government. Those actions are not a surprise. After all, the junior Senator from Texas said 10 months ago that he and the tea party “have to be prepared to go as far as to shut the government down.” It is not a surprise.

Anyway, the Republicans have shuttered the entire Federal Government and they say they are willing to reopen it a piece at a time provided that piece is blessed by the junior Senator from Texas. To allow any one person to pick and choose which parts of the government can reopen is a cynical and ultimately extremely damaging way to run government. It is dangerous for the country, and it is obvious it will not succeed.

I have one final point. It seems today's talking point from my Republican colleagues is: Let's talk. It is obvious they feel the pressure because America sees the intransigence of shutting down the government unless our colleagues in the House get 100 percent of what they want. But it is obvious when their talking point is “let's talk,” they left out a key point at the beginning of their new talking point. Because to only talk while the government is shut down does huge damage to millions of innocent people and to our country's economy. They forgot to say: Let's vote. Then let's talk. Their motto should be modified.

Our motto is: Just vote. Vote to let government stay open. It will take a single vote in the House of Representatives, and then let's talk. To say “let's talk” while the government is shut down prolongs the devastation to our colleagues.

I say to my Republican colleagues who have come up with this talking point “let's talk,” they forgot the first part of their talking point: Just vote, and then let's talk.

I yield the floor and thank my colleague from Alabama for his courtesy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Thank you, Madam President. I appreciate Senator SCHUMER's remarks about the Iran sanctions. They are very important. It is an action by the United States that I think has helped in a number of ways with the radicalism in Iran, and we need to keep it up.

Yesterday, I heard Mr. Clapper—or maybe it was the day before—testify before the Judiciary Committee, and he said he had a number of people not working. Senator GRASSLEY said: If they are not critical people, then why do you need so many? If you have a critical job, you need enough people to do the critical duties. How many do you need? You must not need all these people. You said they are not important to us. I don't think Mr. Clapper had a very good answer to that.

When someone raised the question of defense cuts under the Budget Control Act, and he expressed concern about

that, which I would share. I think Mr. Clapper is right to be concerned about it. So I asked Director Clapper: Do you know the way to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue? Have you ever heard of the Commander in Chief of the United States?

The House—the Republican House, I must say—has a half dozen times or more, over several years, passed legislation that eases those cuts and finds other reductions in spending from other departments and agencies that have received no cuts and as a result reduces the burden on the Defense Department. Indeed, the Defense Department represents one-sixth of the U.S. budget and they are being asked to take one-half the cuts and don't think that counts in bringing down the war costs in Iraq and Afghanistan; that is entirely different. I am talking about the base defense budget that has taken half the cuts under the Budget Control Act. It is too much for the Defense Department. It ought to be spread around. The House has voted more than one-half dozen times to do that. It died in the Senate because I guess they want to utilize the military to threaten Republicans: If you don't do what we want, we are not going to fund your military.

My goodness, the President is the Commander in Chief of the U.S. military. Doesn't he have a responsibility to make sure we are adequately funded? I have to say, I am just getting a little frustrated with that argument.

First of all, I don't think he is required to lay off that many people. He indicated he was reviewing it. He was going to bring back more people, as he could have been doing all along, but I think it did allow another example of disastrous complaints beyond reality. One more thing. Senator SCHUMER, and many of our Democratic colleagues, have been conducting a sustained and direct attack on the millions of people who supported and identified with the tea party movement. Make no mistake about it, they don't respect the people in the tea party movement. They demean them in every way virtually every day in this body.

The tea partiers believe in America and thought this U.S. Congress has turned into lunatics and are putting this country into bankruptcy by its spending too much and passing ObamaCare. Democrats passed ObamaCare in spite of the overwhelming objections by the American people. They did it without listening. The tea party spontaneously rose up, and it clobbered a bunch of Democratic House Members and Senators. It switched the whole majority in the House by a big number. So they don't like it.

Everybody who opposes them and says: You are not listening to us, they are now demeaning and attacking. I think the American people and the people who identify with and support the tea party, either directly or indirectly, need to know that. I know the people in the tea party. They care about

America. They love America. They can't understand what is going on here and they think they are moving us into bankruptcy and we forgot the entire concept of constitutional limited government.

We have heard a lot of talk about the challenges facing the government during the funding lapse we are in. All of us want to see the government return to normal operations, and I certainly do, but what we seem to be losing sight of is the permanent consequences—the debt consequences—of the Affordable Care Act. It needs to be a part of this discussion. The Democrats have refused to listen. They basically blocked any effort in the Senate to reform in any significant way the Affordable Care Act. It has been going on ever since it passed. Their goal is to put up a wall around it so if anything comes up, they will not listen to it. They will not consider it. They will not discuss it. It is a fact. It is a done deal. We can't even discuss it.

The House has a right to fund what they want to fund under the Constitution and not fund what they choose not to fund. They are trying to initiate and force a discussion on one of the most important issues facing America. One of the things that is so dangerous about this law has not been properly discussed, and I wish to talk about it.

A lot of us are going to donate our pay during this furlough to charity. I certainly will. I wish our friends would begin to be more concerned for the private sector workers. There are millions of American workers who will be permanently affected by the Affordable Care Act. They will be hammered by it. Eventually full funding will resume to our government. We know that. This furlough will end.

If this ObamaCare remains in full effect, the consequences for American workers are going to be lasting and damaging, as will the consequences to the United States Treasury and our financial condition.

In particular, as ranking member of the Budget Committee, I would like to focus on the huge and fundamental accounting manipulation that lies at the center of this health care law. I am going to make some statements, and if anybody has detailed objections or rejections to it, I want to see them, and I will respond to them. But I am correct in what I am saying, and I look forward to any discussion that anybody would like to have. So far people don't want to talk; they want to ignore the problem.

We have to deal with these accounting manipulations because it is a colossal blow to our Treasury. The Affordable Care Act was packaged and sold based on a promise that I am going to disprove. The American people knew it wasn't true anyway. Before a joint session of the Congress, the President of the United States said and promised this: “I will not sign a [health care] plan that adds one dime to our deficits, now or any time in the future, period.”

That is a bold statement. It is as good as “read my lips.”

As I addressed earlier this week, hundreds of billions of dollars in Medicare savings to the hospital insurance, HI, trust fund were double-counted under the legislation that was passed—at least \$400 billion over the 2010 to the 2019 10-year period. I asked for an analysis before the bill passed on December 23. We ended up voting on December 24, Christmas Eve. They rammed it through before Scott Brown, who would have denied them the 60th vote, was elected in Massachusetts—liberal Massachusetts—on the commitment he would be the vote to kill ObamaCare, but they were able to get it through before he was able to take office.

The night before we voted, I asked CBO about it. I insisted they give an answer, and they did. They said:

The key point is that savings to the HI trust fund—

That is Medicare—
under PPACA—

That is ObamaCare—
would be received by the government only once, so they cannot be set aside to pay for future Medicare spending and, at the same time, pay for current spending on the other parts of the legislation—

ObamaCare—
or on other programs. . . . To describe the full amount of HI trust fund savings—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have an additional 2 minutes.

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

Mr. SESSIONS. The CBO went on to conclude to say:

To describe the full amount of HI trust fund savings as both improving the government's ability to pay future Medicare benefits and financing new spending outside of Medicare would essentially double-count a large share of those savings and thus overstate the improvement in the government's fiscal position.

What a statement that was. In fact, CBO estimated that if Medicare savings were truly set aside to pay future Medicare benefits, the new health care law would not decrease but increase the deficit over the first 10 years and subsequent decade. They said it would increase the deficit.

But there is a lesser known, equally shocking, account gimmick that I wanted to mention today; that is, how it was done with Social Security. They have obtained another \$100 billion over the next 10 years by double-counting Social Security money.

My time is up, and I could explain it in more detail, but we have to understand this. According to the Congressional Government Accountability Office—and I asked them not too long ago when they issued a report—that over the next long-term implementation of ObamaCare, it would add \$6.2 trillion to the debt of the United States. That is almost as much as the liabilities

that Social Security has and fully accounted for—my budget staff tells me that the ObamaCare legislation will be harder to fund and add more to the deficit—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time is up.

Mr. SESSIONS. Than Social Security will under the current problems. We need to stop digging the hole and we need to start fixing Medicare and Social Security and not adding other programs we can't pay for.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, I know this is not a town that has ever been known for having a long memory. In fact, the recent warning bells rung about our deficits and our debt have predictably faded into the background with all of the attention on the rocky start to this fiscal year.

Last month, the Congressional Budget Office released its long-term budget outlook. Headlines and news stories associated with that release use words such as grim and gloomy and raised alarm about our “long-term fiscal crisis.” The very first line in that report reminds us that between 2009 and 2012, the U.S. Government recorded the largest budget deficits—when compared to the size of the economy—in over half a century.

Reflecting on the current state of play, CBO noted that the Federal debt currently stands at roughly three-quarters of our gross domestic product. More alarming, they predict our Federal debt will match the size of our economy or be equal to 100 percent of GDP by the year 2038.

I understand the temptation to roll our eyes and politely suggest that those facts and figures are of more interest to green-eyeshaded bean counters or to simply wave them off as last month's news. Frankly, this is made much easier when the administration says things such as “we don't have an urgent debt crisis” and when appropriations bills come to the floor at levels that make little sense given our current fiscal realities.

Unfortunately, these facts and figures only tell part of the story. The CBO provides us insight into the impact these facts and figures will have on the economy and the Federal budget deficit. If the growth in our Federal debt is left unchecked, we could eventually see a further drop in private investment, an increase in interest payments, a decrease in Congress's flexibility, and, obviously, a risk of fiscal crisis.

CBO notes that “the unsustainable nature of the federal government's current tax and spending policies presents lawmakers and the public with difficult choices . . . To put the federal budget on a sustainable path for the long term, lawmakers would have to make significant changes to tax and spending policies.”

We all know that given the current environment, it is difficult to do that.

It is difficult when we have a problem just bringing routine spending measures to the President's desk. So this is not an easy conclusion to hear.

But within our dim current fiscal landscape and even dimmer outlook, there has been at least one bright spot. In 2011, Congress agreed to and the President signed into law the Budget Control Act—the BCA. This included statutory discretionary spending caps as well as automatic, across-the-board spending cuts for our failure to enact additional deficit reduction measures.

Certainly trimming Federal spending via across-the-board sequestration cuts is an inelegant means, at best, of addressing our spending problem. It is often referred to as a “blunt instrument.” At a minimum, it is a lazy way to legislate. I believe I join a number of my colleagues when I say I am open to providing additional flexibility while staying within the budget caps with respect to the sequester. But we simply can't deny that locking in discretionary spending caps and enforcing them with automatic sequestration has yielded some of the most significant spending cuts we have seen in Congress in years.

As my colleague from Tennessee, who recently came to the floor, said, 2 years ago, discretionary spending stood at nearly \$1.5 trillion. Last year, under the BCA spending caps, that number dropped to just under \$1 trillion. This year, if no changes occur to the sequester enforcement cap, we will be at \$976 billion. That is a significant drop. That is significant. And that is a good thing.

A recent Wall Street Journal story entitled “The GAO's Unheralded Victory on Spending” quoted the head of Americans for Tax Reform as concluding that we had “made a fundamental shift in the size of the government equation.”

While runaway spending on mandatory programs represents an ever-present issue we have to get our arms around, the BCA spending caps and sequester have put real and meaningful downward pressure on discretionary spending that represents about a third of our Federal budget.

My colleague from Kentucky, the minority leader, recently pointed out that the BCA which passed 2 years ago “actually reduced government spending for 2 years in a row for the first time since the Korean War.” I agree with him when he urges that we not walk away from the spending reductions we have already promised taxpayers.

I have made no secret of the fact that I do not favor the strategy of tying the funding of ObamaCare to the current continuing resolution. As the resulting shutdown drags on and there are more stories about the fights over funding next year, and then the coming debate over the debt ceiling, I find myself favoring this strategy even less. It is entirely likely that the sequester opponents will use the larger debate to push to undo the gains we have made of

meaningful spending cuts by abolishing the sequester by replacing it with meaningless savings, budget gimmicks, or even new taxes.

Far from a conspiracy theory, in recent months there have already been calls for a 2-year sequester hiatus. I agree with Taxpayers for Common Sense when they say that “this may be the convenient answer, but it is no way to get our fiscal house in order.”

It is my hope we can find a way through this shutdown sooner rather than later. It is also my hope that we can at some point have a real conversation about the long-term drivers of our crushing debt that underlie our need to regularly hike the debt ceiling. In the meantime, and as this debate unfolds, I urge my colleagues to resist any effort to undermine the sequester-enforced Budget Control Act spending caps.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, House Speaker BOEHNER is sending the Senate a series of bills to put one Band-Aid at a time on the House Republicans' government shutdown. It is an obvious attempt to fool the American people into thinking House Republicans are acting to end the shutdown. But their transparent tactic is not fooling many people, and here is why: The people of this country know the harm of the government shutdown isn't about the handful of programs that House Republicans will dangle in front of us. The House Republican gambit will not put food inspectors back to work. It will not put Centers for Disease Control experts back to work tracking outbreaks of infectious diseases. It is not going to reopen Head Start classrooms for kids. Their piecemeal approach won't restart lending to small businesses or bring back the FAA inspectors who make sure commercial aircraft are safe, and it won't restore hundreds of other vital services and functions.

No matter how many rifleshot bills the House Republicans try, all they do is leave our government full of holes. We could spend months legislating in bits and pieces while House Republicans ignore the obvious solution: The House should vote on the clean continuing resolution the Senate has sent to them, because that vote will end the shutdown.

The Republican bits-and-pieces strategy is like smashing a piece of crockery with a hammer, gluing two or three bits back together today, a couple more tomorrow, and two or three more the day after that. House Republicans should stop before they do any more damage, put down the hammer, pick up the Senate's continuing resolution, and at least put it to a vote.

I heard one Republican on the Senate floor yesterday argue that we should adopt the piecemeal approach because, after all, he said, under regular order, we pass separate appropriations bills for different parts of the government one at a time. While that is true, it is

irrelevant. We have a mechanism for keeping the government open while we go through the regular order process. It is called a continuing resolution, and it keeps the full government open while we adopt appropriations bills one at a time.

Five days ago, the Senate passed, for the third time, a continuing resolution to keep the government open and sent it to the House. It is well past time for Speaker BOEHNER to bring it to a vote.

Republicans want to negotiate changes in the Affordable Care Act. Of course we will talk about that once the government is functioning, but we should not and will not allow the U.S. Government to be held hostage by the Republicans while we are talking about the Affordable Care Act or any other subject which they or we wish to talk about.

I am keenly aware, as chairman of the Armed Services Committee, that one of the most devastating effects of this Republican shutdown is its damage to our national security. Already our men and women in uniform have been asked to operate under the damaging effects of sequestration. Those cuts have done serious harm to our military readiness and military families, and the shutdown is making things far worse.

Because of the House Republican shutdown, workers at the Defense Department maintenance depots around the country who should be repairing and preparing vehicles, ships, and aircraft for combat, are instead furloughed, along with hundreds of thousands of other Department of Defense civilians.

Training exercises have largely come to a halt. Anyone who thinks that is no big deal has never spent any time with our men and women in uniform. The key factor in our military's effectiveness isn't our sophisticated weapons systems, as important as they are; it is the highly trained men and women who employ those weapons. Every day of this shutdown wears away the sharp edge of their readiness to respond to crises around the world.

Some troops and their families won't get tuition assistance. Most travel is suspended, including many permanent changes of station. That means military families scheduled to move to a new location who may have already sold a home at their old duty location or committed to a lease or a mortgage at their new location, and spouses who need to start a job search, face financial loss and disruption and uncertainty in their lives. Our troops and their families can't even go to their on-post commissaries because they are closed.

The bill we passed last week to ensure our troops would receive paychecks is all well and good, but that did not address the many shortfalls our troops and their families face during this shutdown.

Another truly outrageous example is that the families of the brave men and

women who were killed while defending this Nation will see a delay in the payment of death benefits because of this shutdown.

Some may say, You are right, these problems for our national security are intolerable. Let's pass a bill to fix them.

We have. The Senate passed a continuing resolution three times, the last one 5 days ago, which would keep the government functioning. Speaker BOEHNER refuses to allow the House to vote on the Senate-passed continuing resolution. No matter how many piecemeal bills the Speaker sends to us here in the Senate, he will be leaving out millions of Americans who will continue to suffer from the shutdown that he and tea party-dominated Republicans have created. Every day they spend obsessing over ObamaCare is one more day of unfairness and uncertainty for our troops and their families. Every day of the House Republicans' destructive submission to the tea party is another day food is not inspected, it is another day FBI agents are working without pay, it is another day the SBA is not approving loans for small businesses, it is another day scientists are barred from their labs and on and on.

Speaker BOEHNER can bring this chaos to a halt by bringing the Senate's continuing resolution to the floor of the House for a vote. The Senate has voted three times on House versions of continuing resolutions. Speaker BOEHNER refuses to vote even once on the Senate bill. Why? This is the question, by the way, the media has not yet asked Speaker BOEHNER. Why? Why has he not brought to the floor of the House the Senate-passed continuing resolution? Here is to the answer, and it is a stunning answer: Because it might pass. You heard me right. The reason Speaker BOEHNER is not bringing the continuing resolution passed in the Senate to the floor of the House for a vote is because it is going to pass.

That is anathema. It would be anathema—anathema—to the Speaker of the House for a continuing resolution to pass if it depended upon Democratic votes. It is his policy not to depend on any Democratic votes to pass legislation in the House. The policy of the Speaker is truly the epitome of rank partisanship. In fact, I do not know of a clearer example of extreme partisan policy than Speaker BOEHNER's refusal to hold a vote on bills that would rely on some Democratic votes to pass.

One of Speaker BOEHNER's Republican colleagues, Congressman DENT from Pennsylvania, has verified this sad fact. Here is what Congressman DENT said last night on PBS's NewsHour.

I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to proceed for 4 additional minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEVIN. Here is what Congressman DENT said:

I do believe it's imperative that we do have a clean funding bill to fund the government.

Then he continued:

That was the intent of the Republican leadership all along, but obviously there were a few dozen folks in the House Republican Conference who weren't prepared to vote for a clean bill—

Here is his conclusion. This is now a Republican Congressman speaking last night, saying:

... a few dozen folks in the House Republican Conference who weren't prepared to vote for a clean bill, and that's why we're in the situation we're in right now.

That is an astonishing report of abdication of leadership in the House of Representatives. What an incredible statement about the stranglehold that a few dozen ideological zealots now have on the Republican Party in the House of Representatives. It is an extraordinary moment in history when a Speaker of the House allows a few dozen Members of Congress to bring the government of this Nation to a standstill.

When we cut through all the claims and all the counterclaims, all the press conferences, all the photo-ops, there is one unassailable, indisputable fact that remains: The Senate has passed a continuing resolution to keep the government open, and Speaker BOEHNER refuses to bring it to a vote in the House of Representatives.

It need not be this way. All that is required to break the stranglehold that the tea party has on House Republicans is for Speaker BOEHNER to bring the Senate-passed continuing resolution that would reopen the government to the floor of the House for a vote. I urgently hope he will do so, and I hope that every hour until he does, he is asked to defend his refusal to do so.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for 2 minutes and to be followed by Senator ENZI for the normal time he was allocated.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, we share being attorney generals of our States, and I just wish to take a moment to express my sincere and deep thanks—and from all of us—to the men and women who protect us every day, the Capitol Police. We had a very serious incident yesterday. Our people rallied and responded in an appropriate way. I believe they conducted themselves in a professional way.

For example, I saw one young man. He said he had heard and responded immediately, was running toward the scene. We think: Well, that is OK. That is what they do. That is what they are supposed to do.

We need to understand, when one of our young men and women are responding to a scene of a firing, of weapons discharged, they do not know what is

there. In this environment, it could be a very serious thing. Their very life is at stake every time. Everyplace they stand on our streets, everyplace they stand in our building, the Capitol, and our office buildings, they are standing there subject to a threat by somebody who could appear out of nowhere with deadly force, and they do it with professionalism and courage every day.

We have been very fortunate in seeing this Capitol be well protected, and I wish to express my appreciation for them and all who place their lives at risk every day to protect the operational functions of this government.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, I wish to thank the Senator from Alabama for his comments. I too want to add my thanks and appreciation for law enforcement people all over the United States who are doing their job and often have to do things such as give tickets. They do not get anything but bad news and grief for it, but they are out there protecting us at the same time and they definitely deserve credit, our admiration, and our prayers.

Madam President, I also wish to comment a little bit on what the Senator from Michigan said with his indisputable facts. The indisputable fact is that we are only where we are right now with a government shutdown and the attempts to get a continuing resolution through because Congress did not do its job, the Senate did not do its job, the job we have to pass spending bills. If we had passed the spending bills—and there are 12 of them—if we passed the 12 spending bills, there would not be a need for a continuing resolution.

What is a continuing resolution? It is permission for government to continue functioning as it has been functioning, spending one-twelfth of what they spent the year before for each month until we finally come up with a spending bill.

The way the law is written, we are supposed to have a budget by April 15 and that is a very significant day and it is an intentional day. Then, right after that, we are supposed to start doing spending bills, and we are supposed to allocate the amount of money we want each agency, program, department to spend.

We have not done that for years. Consequently, we get into this bind where we are saying: Go ahead and spend money, and we will figure it out later.

We have had a sequester, and the way the sequester works is it is supposed to be a 2.3-percent reduction from each agency, program, department. We did continuing resolutions last year. We did continuing resolutions for at least 7 months—probably 7½, maybe 8 months. So they got to continue spending what they had been spending the year before.

They knew a sequester was coming because Congress again did not do its work and come up with an alternate

way to fund government. So they only had 4 months left to take their 2.3 percent out of their total spending, which would be the whole spending for the year. Do you know what that does? That makes it 5.3 percent.

But that is not bad enough. We have an administration that sent out word to make it hurt, and we have an administration that also took care of Washington but did not take care of the people out in the hinterlands of Wyoming—Wyoming and the rest of the United States—people who are out there actually doing the work, person-to-person, that is supposed to be done with what we are funding. Instead, it went to a lot of administration.

I had some people in this week from the Head Start program, and they showed me how they were cut 7.5 percent. What part of 2.3 percent would 7.5 percent be? Part of that is that 5.3 percent because it came so late. But it is 7.5 percent because 2.5 percent of that goes to fund the Federal Government in Washington. That is not where the work is done. That is where the reports are done. That is where the regulations are done. That is where the things are done that stymie the people out there who are having to actually help the people.

The Civil Air Patrol came to me. They do search and rescue from the air when people are lost around Wyoming. They said: We are being cut 60 percent. I said: What part of 2.3 percent would 60 percent be? They are even taking three of their five airplanes. I said: If they do not have any money, how can they take your airplanes? How would they have the money to fly them anywhere?

It is just one more of those things where the administration is saying make them feel the pain. Of course, part of that was closing down White House tours. How much can it cost for a self-guided White House tour? That is what they are. They are self-guided. You get a brochure. It is my understanding it is about an \$18,000 savings. That is nothing compared to what we are working with.

We have \$9 billion a year worth of duplication just on things under health and education and labor and pensions—\$9 billion in duplication. What is \$18,000? Why couldn't we take a look at those budgets in detail and get rid of duplication? This is duplication that is evaluated by the White House. But when we have a shutdown, we do not do that. We do not eliminate any of that.

Everybody has seen the World War II Memorial with the barricades. Ever since the World War II Memorial went up, I have never seen barricades there. I have been down there in the middle of the night and been able to walk through the World War II Memorial or any of the other memorials down there. I do not think I could use the restroom, and there is probably some justification for having the restrooms closed because there is the problem of cleaning them—what would require some additional personnel—but just to walk through things?

We are making progress, though, because they also barricaded off Lincoln Park. It is a children's playground up here on the Hill. There were pictures in the paper the other day of a little girl looking at the sign on the gate that was locked saying that the park was closed. I am pleased to report that yesterday that sign was gone, kids were playing in the park. There is no cost to that. So there is no purpose in having any kind of a shutdown regarding that.

The Smithsonian out here is a national park, and there are streets that go through the national park. They go through it one way primarily, but they do not have any additional cost to them. They do not serve anything. But they were blocked off. You could not go through streets that people normally drive through on any given day.

In my own State, Jackson Hole—if you are driving from Dubois to Jackson, on the right-hand side of the road is a gorgeous view of the Tetons. These are some lands left over from the Alps that God had, so he put them in Wyoming. People like to stop and take pictures of them, particularly at this time of year because the aspens are turning to gold and they are mixed in with the pine trees. There is a river that runs through there and then there are these majestic mountains.

The turnouts along that road are barricaded. You cannot turn out. You could not turn out to fix a flat tire. You could not turn out if you needed a nap. You cannot turn out to take a picture. Why? How did they get the barricades? How much did they have to spend for the barricades? How much did they have to spend to have somebody go out and put up those barricades?

Incidentally, if you drive along the GW Parkway out here, it is the same way. The little turnouts that are along there are barricaded. Where did we get all these barricades? If it was a business and they treated their customers that way, they would be out of business, and they would deserve to be out of business. We should be operating differently than that.

I did notice Air Force is going to play Navy tomorrow. But the justification is there is some revenue for that, and there is. If you charge admission to those things, and they are highly popular sporting events, there will be a lot of people who go and they will pay a lot of money for it and it will exceed the cost of putting it on at the venue. That would be the government making money. There is an oxymoron.

But Yellowstone Park is in my State. Yellowstone was the first national park. In fact, it was the first park in the world. It is a huge park. In fact, it is the size of Connecticut. It sits up there in the corner of Wyoming. A lot of people go through Yellowstone in order to get to Idaho or Montana or maybe Montana folks trying to get down to Wyoming. But that is all closed off now.

What is interesting to me is that if you do drive through there, you pay a

fee. It is actually revenue. Now, of course, when I brought that up, I was reminded that the revenue goes to the general fund. But I had to say: Do you know where the money for the national parks comes from? It comes from the general fund. So if you do not collect the money, you will not have the money to put back into the park.

Not only that, there are concessionaires who pay to be able to sell gas and food and lodging in Yellowstone Park. Their customers cannot get to them. I do not think we relieved them of paying the fee they have to pay. I am pretty sure the concessionaires were expecting about \$4.5 million worth of business this month—not the busiest month but an important month. I think there are ways we could have continued to collect revenue, but we are not doing it. Let's make it hurt.

We are here with this continuing resolution. The last vote I got to do was actually a vote to have a conference committee. It wasn't any demand from the House, it was a request for a conference committee. What happens in a conference committee? The leader appoints some people from here, in conjunction with the minority leader. They appoint some in the House. They get together and try to work this out. But, no, that was voted down by the Democrats, so we are not going to have that.

I have a lot more that I would say. I realize my time has expired. We are in this position because we have been doing a bad job of governing.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, we are in day 4 of a tea party Republican shutdown. We need to be very clear as to how we got here. The Senate majority leader negotiated with the Speaker of the House, and after a long negotiation in which the Senate made major concessions, we agreed to pass a 6-week funding bill for services of the government, to keep services open while we negotiate the larger issues around the budget.

We passed a bill with the funding levels asked for by the House Republicans. Republicans asked that we continue funding below the levels we believe are necessary to grow the economy for 6 weeks. Rather than having a government shutdown, at the time we believed it was in the interests of the American people, of all of those who provide those important services to us, that we, in fact, agree with the House on a 6-week extension. We sent it over to them, asked for by the Speaker, agreed to by the Senate. There it has sat.

Let me quote again from Congressman DENT—a Republican colleague of Speaker BOEHNER's—who said last night on "PBS NewsHour":

I do believe it's imperative that we do have a clean funding bill, a straight funding bill to fund the government. That was the intent of the Republican leadership all along. But

obviously there were a few dozen folks in the House Republican conference who were not prepared to vote for a clean bill and that is why we are in the situation we are in.

"A few dozen folks"—part of this tea party wing. He said: That is why we are where we are today.

You can overcome that very simply. Just bring the bill that the Speaker said he wanted, that we were willing to agree to for short-term funding of Federal services, bring it to the floor, and those few dozen folks can vote no and everybody else can vote yes. Then we would have the government back open. So it is truly a question of just letting the House vote. Just vote. Right now, today, before 5:00, we could be done with this irresponsible action. We could then make sure the Federal Government can pay its bills and not default and at the same time go to conference to negotiate the larger budget issues, which we need to do, but that is not what is happening.

So it is now day 4. Government services are still closed. The bill that could open them—which has a majority vote, which has Republicans and Democrats—is sitting in the House because admittedly Republican Members of the House are saying a few dozen folks did not like it.

Well, in our great democracy, our Founders said majority rules, but somehow we seem to have forgotten that around here. We have elections. The person who gets the majority wins. The others are not happy. They lose. Majority rules. Same thing happens on legislation.

So now we are in a situation with a group defined as "a few dozen folks" in the House driving the train because there is no leadership in the House to bring up the vote and be able to pass this continuing resolution with a bipartisan vote.

We are paying a very big cost right now as a country waiting for the House to vote. Nearly 800,000 people have been laid off—800,000 people. We are just barely coming out of the recession. We are coming back. We are creating jobs—not enough. When this President came in, we had six people looking for work for one job. Now it is down to three people looking for work for one job. That is better. It is not good enough. There is more to do, and we all know it. So what is the response? Well, let's just lay off 800,000 people in the middle of this effort to try to bring a middle class roaring back in this country.

There are about 7,500 people in my State of Michigan who are providing important services, people who are in middle-class jobs, have a mortgage, have at least one car payment, many sending their kids to college, trying to make sure they can care for their families, proud of what they do providing various public services that we all benefit from, and they are now sitting and waiting.

It is costing our country about \$300 million a day—\$300 million a day—in

lost wages and productivity, \$300 million a day that we cannot afford to lose. This could all be ended in 5 minutes if the Speaker of the House would just allow a vote on a bill that contains the funding levels that the Speaker himself asked for, not those that we would like to see because on a longer term negotiation, we are going to fight very hard to increase opportunities for education and innovation, focusing more on economic growth and jobs. This is a number asked for for a short-term continuing resolution for 6 weeks. They evidently cannot take "yes" for an answer.

Today I had an opportunity to meet a wonderful little boy named Kai who is 2 years old. He and his mom Anna were with us talking about the impact on the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control, the Food and Drug Administration, and other public health functions for our country and what it means to families.

Kai was born with a heart defect. He has had two bypass surgeries now in just his 2 little years of life. Thanks to a clinical trial at the Children's National Health System, Kai was able to get innovative treatment that he needs. He was running all over the place this morning, a great success story.

The things we do together as a country are what we should be proud of. The work that is being done by our doctors and researchers at places such as the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Food and Drug Administration are literally saving lives. These men and women who are now furloughed, not working because of the shutdown, have gone through years of training. They are dedicated. They love what they do. These are some of the top experts on infectious diseases and food safety and cancer research in the country and in the world. Right now they are sitting at home, maybe watching us, trying to figure out what the heck is going on—or stronger language. They are not allowed to work. If they are working, they are not working with pay, all because of a few dozen folks in the House of Representatives, tea party folks who are running the show in the House who have decided they want to shut the entire government down over the Affordable Care Act, over the fact that we believe—the country believes there had to be a way to find affordable insurance for 30 million folks who have not been able to find and purchase affordable insurance.

The director of the division at the CDC that monitors food-borne illnesses—scary stuff like E. coli outbreaks—said recently he has three people working in his whole department right now—three people for our country monitoring food-borne illnesses, three people in charge of tracking every possible case of food-borne illness in the entire country.

This needs to be a wake-up call. It is time to get the government open so

that people can go back to work who are in positions to monitor and protect our public health, the defense of this country, educational opportunities, and the safety of our country. Get these CDC officials back to work and make sure our families are safe.

CBS News reports that the Centers for Disease Control headquarters, which is in Atlanta, GA, is a ghost town. Folks who monitor infectious diseases have 6,000 employees in Atlanta, GA, and they are calling it a ghost town—in America, the greatest country in the world. The Director of the CDC, the Nation's top doctor in charge of infectious diseases, said he is "losing sleep" because "I do not know that we will be able to find and stop the things that might kill people."

I ask unanimous consent for 1 additional minute.

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

Ms. STABENOW. Let me go on and conclude. We heard on the floor earlier from the junior Senator from Texas, who spoke eloquently about the great work being done by the veterans health care system. It is unfortunate that it took a government shutdown for my colleague, I might say through the Chair, to understand how important a completely government-run health system is. The VA is completely government run and funded.

My colleagues who are opposing people buying private insurance through private exchanges and making their own decisions about what works for them, who are saying it is the end of the world if families can buy insurance that is more affordable for them and that they can actually get what they are paying for because insurance companies cannot kick them off when they get sick or block them from getting insurance if they have a preexisting condition—they are saying that is awful, but a completely government-run health care system called the VA should be funded.

I happen to agree with that. Our system through the VA is important for veterans. We need to keep it funded. We need to keep the CDC, the National Institutes of Health, the FDA, and every other part of our important system funded.

The House needs to vote.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DONNELLY. First, I wish to thank the Capitol Hill police and the Secret Service for their bravery, their heroism, and their work, not only yesterday but every day, to keep this Capitol safe and to keep the people in it safe. We are in their debt.

The people of Indiana all want jobs. We want to go to work. We want and we know the dignity that comes with a good day's labor and the chance to take care of our family. The people in Indiana have told me time after time, and they have said it very clearly: Joe, focus on jobs, focus on the basics.

I couldn't be prouder of my home State. Every day I am thankful I have

the amazing privilege to represent all Hoosiers in the Senate. But our economy in Indiana isn't as strong as we would like it to be. The national unemployment rate is 7.3 percent; Indiana, 8.1. Indiana's median household income declined 13.2 percent from 2000 to 2012 and it lags behind the national average. We have dropped to 40th among States in per capita income. We have so much work to do in my home State and in our country.

As you know, I am an optimist by nature, but I am incredibly disheartened by what I have seen in Washington recently. Some in Congress are playing a game of chicken with our jobs, with our economy, and with our future. Because these folks haven't gotten their way, thousands of Hoosiers are furloughed and are not receiving paychecks, the paychecks that help them feed their families, pay for college, and invest their hard-earned money in the local-run businesses.

Many of the good people at the Naval Surface Warfare Center in Crane, IN, who keep our troops in Afghanistan and around the world safe, were sent home recently. They can't do their critical work that keeps our Nation safe.

The demands of a few here have caused the scientists at the Centers for Disease Control to be unable to go to work. These actions have also caused many of the patriots at Fort Wayne's Air National Guard Station and Grissom Air Reserve Base and at Terre Haute to have their work and their operations idled.

We are now at a point in the debate where some are putting our economy at risk simply to advance their own political agendas. These folks are shutting down operations across our Nation and in my beloved home State, and that hurts our still recovering economy.

We have so much work to do to move Indiana and our Nation forward, and Congress isn't helping. We talk all the time about providing certainty to our business friends. Hoosier businesses thrive on hard work, creativity, and teamwork. They also deserve a government that provides certainty, a steady hand in choppy seas. They don't need a government that creates the storm.

Most folks back home think Congress can play some role in improving the economy, even if that role is simply not to make things worse. But over the past year, Congress has made and continues to make things much more difficult. It is embarrassing that the actions of some in Congress these days are now the greatest obstacle to future job creation in our country.

America's economic confidence is measured daily by polling by Gallup. It is currently at minus 22. It matches the low for the year. It is worth pointing out that the other low for the year happened right before sequestration took effect in March—another problem, another self-inflicted wound caused by Congress.

The implementation of sequester cuts, which is what happened when Congress proved itself unable to make the tough decisions that Congress was sent here to make, has led to job losses and furloughs, so many families don't have as much to make ends meet.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office reported we could lose up to 1.6 million jobs next year if these across-the-board cuts continue. Further, a number of economists have concluded that Congress significantly reduced this country's economic growth because we failed to replace the cuts with something smarter. Economic growth is a fancy term for people going to work and people who have jobs.

The American people are losing confidence in their economy because of Congress. Here we are 6 months later, 4 days into a government shutdown, 13 days away from defaulting on our debt. History tells us government shutdowns are terrible for the economy and terrible for jobs.

If we look at the last time the Federal Government shut down in 1995 and 1996 for 27 days, Congress put hundreds of thousands of people out of work, with \$1.4 billion in damages, and consumer confidence took a double-digit dip. Back then our country's economy was in a stronger place than it is today and it recovered a little bit more quickly. This government shutdown is damaging our economy at a time where it is very fragile.

However, this government shutdown has damaged our economy, but a default on our bills as we look forward would be absolutely devastating. What happens if we fail to raise the debt limit and if we stop paying our bills? That is what the debt limit is. It is our obligation to pay our bills.

While it is completely unprecedented, well-respected economists warn it could send us right back into a tailspin. We are still recovering from the last recession. At a time when Hoosiers are trying to get back to work and take care of our families, Congress's inability to work together is making it so much more difficult. Congress is not helping and is actually hindering job creation and economic growth.

This is no way to run a country. I stand ready to work with anyone in a commonsense way out of this train wreck. We must find a way to stop hurting the economy and to actually help the people who have made this country such a great place.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. COATS. As did my colleague from Indiana, Senator DONNELLY, I also wish to take a moment before I deliver my remarks here to thank the Capitol Police, all of law enforcement, and first responders who have put themselves on the line to protect others.

I know I speak for every Republican, every Democrat, and all of our staffs that we deeply appreciate their work and their sacrifice. These brave men and women are here every day whether

they are paid or not. We appreciate that.

If there is one thing we are united on, and I wish there were more, it is our respect for those who serve to protect, those serving us here at home as well as those serving us in harm's way abroad. We owe them our support and we owe them our thanks.

I am hearing from a number of Hoosiers, as my colleague from Indiana has, that they are tired of political gamesmanship, they are tired of paying taxes to a government that isn't listening or delivering for them, and now we are in a situation where they are tired of our careening toward these cliffs and shutdown. But when the Republican-controlled House sent over legislation to the Senate, calling for House and Senate leaders to conference together, to sit down in a room, talk through this problem and come to a solution, this good-faith effort was rejected out of hand by the Senate majority leader, Senator REID of Nevada.

We wanted to sit down and debate this issue. Once again, yet another good-faith effort sent over by Republicans to help fund the essential functions of this government was dead on arrival in the Senate. The Senate majority leader, parroting the words of the President, said: We will not negotiate. This was refusing to allow Republicans and Democrats to try to find a way forward to resolve this issue and get our government functioning.

In the past when these things happened, Presidents, realizing that they were elected to lead—we are elected to serve here, we are elected to serve the President, we are elected to serve the people we represent, but the President is elected to serve this country. When the President in the past has come up in a stalemate situation, there has been a reach out to the other side whenever we have a divided government.

After 2008, when the Democrats won control of the House, the Senate, and the executive branch, they had total control. They pushed through a number of measures without any single Republican or opposition support. Those programs now we are dealing with, and ObamaCare is the primary one that has brought us to this particular point. The lesson learned here is when one party has total control without support from the opposition party, we end up with legislation that is dysfunctional, that doesn't work, that reflects the ideology of one party and doesn't have any balance to it. We are now in a position where we have a divided government. What we would like is to have some say on how this goes forward, to point out those things of this bill that are not working, to point out the disaster this is turning out to be, the dysfunction of this particular legislation.

The point I am trying to make here is whatever the issue, whenever we come to a stalemate, historically throughout the history of this country it is the Commander in Chief, the

President, who has stepped forward and taken the initiative and said: We need to work together to solve this. We can't impose our will on the body that the American people has divided, giving control of one House to one party and control of another House to another party.

Ronald Reagan reached out to Tip O'Neill, and some very significant measures, stalemates, were resolved because the President reached out and was willing to negotiate.

The Democratic President, Bill Clinton, reached out to a then-Republican Speaker of the House in the 1990s, and we addressed a major issue with welfare reform, much-needed welfare reform. It couldn't have happened without the President reaching out.

I could give other examples, but we are in another stalemate situation. Yet what do we hear? No matter what Republicans send over, no matter what the offer is, if the offer is to let us sit down and conference this, the reaction from the Senate majority leader is: We refuse to negotiate. The reaction from the White House and this President over and over and over again is: I will not negotiate.

Even though the American public sent you control of one House of Congress, even though the Constitution establishes the role of the Congress vis-à-vis the President, and calls for an agreement between the two before we can move forward, this President, for whatever motive, says: I will not negotiate.

We can do something right now to help Americans. We can come together to help fund important programs and departments that should not have been jeopardized because of this impasse. We can at least do that. If we can't get the President to negotiate, can we not at least take some steps forward for those essential functions of government?

Republicans have sent over nine such propositions and proposals. Each one of them has been rejected, dead on arrival, not even allowed to debate, and procedurally stopped by the majority leader.

Let me suggest four that are waiting in the wings and surely, for reasons of health and safety of Americans, surely we can agree to support these four and perhaps more. Some others have been suggested. Surely we have to conclude that this is an essential function. How it was that they were declared non-essential is beyond me.

Let me mention the four: Honoring our veterans and the commitments that we have made to them, providing for our national security, and protecting Americans' health.

I spoke earlier this week on the Honoring Our Promise to America's Veterans Act, a bill providing funding for disability payments, the GI bill education training, and VA home loans under the same conditions that were in place last year. The House passed this, but the Senate majority leader has blocked it here.

The House also passed the Pay Our Guard and Reserve Act. This bill provides funding for the pay and allowances of military personnel in the Reserve component and National Guard component who are scheduled to report for duty as early as this weekend. Denying support for those who wear the uniform and stand ready and are engaged when called on, and have been trained to do so, is a great disservice to the men and women who have dedicated so much and put themselves at great risk to wear the uniform of the United States.

Secondly, funding the Department of Homeland Security. There are a number of ways our homeland security is impacted under the shutdown. One of the impacts on FEMA—the Federal Emergency Management Agency—is the need to be funded so they are prepared to respond to natural disasters. We are only a breaking-news headline away from another natural disaster or from some other need for FEMA to engage. Yet their employees are furloughed and not in place to be ready to respond.

We have a tropical storm in the gulf right now that may turn into something dangerous. Our emergency response efforts to provide for our homeland support is inadequately funded. Can we at least do that?

How about funding for our intelligence community? The House will send us Preserving Our Intelligence Capabilities Act, which will provide immediate funding for personnel compensation and contracts for those individuals who have been determined by the Director of National Intelligence as necessary to support critical intelligence activities and counterterrorism efforts.

Under the current shutdown, 70 percent of our civilian employees in our intelligence community have been sent home on furlough. Director of National Intelligence Clapper said this lapse in funding our intelligence agency is a “dreamland” for our foreign intelligence adversaries.

Can we not at least, if we have a delay in resolving our issues here—and we have that delay, as I said, because the Senate majority leader has not allowed us to sit down and work—Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for an additional 3 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COATS. I thank the Chair.

Can we not at least fund those agencies that are looking to protect us from terrorist acts, that are in place to keep the American people safe? How can we reject that?

Finally, let me mention a fourth—and there are others, but let me mention this one. Fund Food and Drug Safety Programs, safety programs for those who are in need of approvals for new drugs and new devices and who are experiencing significant delays because

the Federal employees at FDA who review these functions cannot report to work.

Madam President, frankly, I am perplexed why the majority leader continues to oppose even consideration and debate for individual funding bills when they just agreed a couple of days ago to funding for our troops, and I applaud that and support that. But if we did that because of the essential nature of their function, shouldn't we also include these other items? Shouldn't we agree we need to fulfill our commitments to guard and reserve and our intelligence community at this critical time?

The House has already sent over nine proposals to the Senate for consideration—nine—and nine times the Senate has had the opportunity to pass legislation to reopen our government and fund essential programs, but the Senate majority leader chose not to do so and the President refuses to even engage.

A government shutdown is a pox on all our houses. We need to do what the people of this great country elected us to do, and that is to work to find a solution to this government shutdown. How can we do that if the Democratic chair at the negotiating table is empty? What we are looking at here is a Clint Eastwood moment. We are looking at an empty chair. Mr. President, where are you?

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. I want to thank the Senator from Indiana for invoking the name of one of my favorite actors and directors. I would say to my friend, I didn't think our friend Clint Eastwood's appearance at the Republican National Convention was one of his finest moments, but it is what it is. It is nice to be with my colleague and to follow him on the floor.

Madam President, if it were left up to the Senator from Indiana and this Senator, as well as our colleagues here from North Dakota and Rhode Island, I think we could probably work out a pretty good budget deal in a fairly short period of time that raises some revenues through tax reform to reduce the deficit, reforms to the entitlement programs to save money and save the programs for the long haul, and to make sure we don't savage old people and poor people. And while we are doing that, probably we can change the culture of the Federal Government a little so that we focus even more—not on a culture of spendthrift but on a culture of thrift.

Those are the things we need to do. And I am always happy to be with him and happy to follow him. It is so nice to be with Senator COATS today.

Following up on what Senator COATS has been saying, it reminds me of a phone conversation I had with a Delawarean today. She asked me: Why don't we all just agree to what the Republicans are proposing and adopt a

couple of bills or amendments to fund some pieces of the government but not many? And I said: Let's go back a little in time.

What I sought to do in that conversation was to explain, in pretty simple, straightforward terms, how the budget process works here—how the budget process works here—and where it has gone awry. We have had a budget law since about 1974. The expectation of the Budget Act is that the President, usually in January or February of every year, will give a budget address. This is what the President and his or her administration thinks we ought to do in terms of revenues, in terms of spending—what our priorities should be.

The expectation in the law is also that this body, the Senate, and the House down the hall from here, will agree on a budget resolution sometime by, say late April of the year, for a budget starting October 1 of that same year. For a number of years—about 4 years—we didn't do our job in terms of developing a budget resolution. It was difficult in a divided Congress to do that. So for several years we didn't. Republicans criticized us harshly for not having passed a budget. What they were talking about was a budget resolution.

There is a difference between a budget and a budget resolution. In my home State of Delaware, we have three budgets: An operating budget for the State of Delaware, a capital budget for the State of Delaware, and something called grant and aid, which is something the legislature cares a lot about. It is only a couple of percentage points of all our revenue. But there are actually three budgets. Here we have one, and it is a unified budget with capital and operating expenses thrown in together. But there is no real direct corollary between what we do here and what we do in most of our States.

Most States have an operating and a capital budget. Here we have a budget resolution. The budget resolution is not a nitty-gritty line-item budget. What it does is to set a framework for what is to follow—the appropriations bills, roughly a dozen of them—and what we do on the revenue side through the work of the Finance Committee here and the Ways and Means Committee in the House.

The budget resolution says: This is roughly how much we are going to spend in these general areas, and this is roughly how much revenue we are going to raise from these general sources. That is a budget resolution. It is, if you will, a framework. I call it the skeleton. It is like a skeleton. Later on we have to come along and put the meat on the bones.

The budget resolution is supposed to be adopted here by the end of April. Usually the Senate will adopt one version, our version, and the House will adopt another version. We did that this year, by the end of April, as I recall, and they were different. In our budget resolution we did deficit reduction. We

didn't balance the budget over the next several years, but we continued to reduce the deficit. Remember, 4 years ago, the deficit peaked out at \$1.4 trillion—\$1.4 trillion. This last year that was just concluded we cut it by more than half, as I understand, and we expect it will be brought down again further this year. Should we do better? Do we need to do better? Sure we do.

The budget resolution we passed here took a 50–50 approach; half the deficit reduction for the next 10 years will be on the spending side and half will be on the revenue side. The budget resolution adopted by the House of Representatives, as I recall, did nothing on the revenue side, nothing on the Defense side, as I recall, and basically took the savings out of, for the most part, domestic discretionary spending. If we set aside entitlement programs—Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid—set aside Defense, and set aside interest payments, the whole rest of the budget—everything from agriculture to transportation, everything else—that is where they took the savings. And they reduced that part of the budget from about 15 percent of all Federal spending down to something close to 5 percent. That is not my vision of what government should be about.

Anyway, we came to the end of April, and the Senate and House passed different budget resolutions, and there was an effort here to go to conference—to create a conference committee and for us to send conferees. For people who might be watching and asking: What is he talking about, a conference committee is like a compromise committee—some Members of the House, some Members of the Senate, Democrats and Republicans, go to this committee we create for just a short period of time to hammer out a compromise. In order to do that, somebody has to come to the floor—usually the leader comes to the floor—to ask unanimous consent that the Senate appoint conferees, Democrats and Republicans, to help create this conference committee and work out a compromise.

That request was rejected. It was objected to. It has been objected to again and again and again, whether the person making the unanimous consent to go to conference to work out this budget compromise—it has been made by Democrats or Republicans, at least one Republican. Senator MURRAY has made the request—she chairs the Budget Committee—close to 20 times, and JOHN MCCAIN, a Republican, and Presidential candidate a couple years ago, long-time friend and colleague, has made the request close to 10 times. He wants to go to conference. He wants to solve the problems. So do I, and I think most of us do.

The ways to do it are those things I talked about—entitlement reforms that save these programs, that save some money but don't savage old peo-

ple or poor people; tax reform that generates, among other things, some revenues that can be used for deficit reduction; and then to focus on everything we do. How do we get a better result for less money in everything we do?

Long story short, here we are. It is not the first of May, it is not the first of June, not the first of July, and not the first of August or September. It is the first part of October, and we have yet to be able to get the unanimous consent to form that conference committee to work out a compromise on the budget. That is where we have fallen short. That is where we have fallen short.

We hear a lot about obstruction: The majority leader or the President won't let us work with the Republicans on these piecemeal approaches. For everybody here—and I love DAN COATS—but for everybody here in the Senate, we could all come up with our list of four. We could come up with a list of 14 priorities. If you multiply that by 100, that would be 1,400 priorities that ought to be in all this piece work, these piecemeal changes we are going to make to the spending for the next couple of weeks or next couple of months.

Why don't we just do this. Why don't we agree to what the Speaker of the House agreed to, and that is a spending level for a short period of time—a continuing resolution, a spending plan, for a short period of time—not for the whole year. In this case, we have been talking about a continuing resolution, a short-term spending bill, that runs about 45 days, until maybe the middle of November.

The level of that spending, we can argue about that. But what we ended up doing is, our leader, HARRY REID, talking to JOHN BOEHNER, Speaker of the House—and he has a tough job. None of these jobs are easy, but they have really tough jobs. But our leader said to the Speaker: What would be a level of spending for those 45 days or 60 days for the short-term spending bill? What level of spending works for you? My understanding is the Speaker vetoed that with his folks over there and they came back and said: How about using the level of spending we are at for the last fiscal year, for 2013, and to fund for those 45 or 60 days whatever is covered by the continuing resolution, funded at that level for that period of time?

That is not our level. The Democratic level, to be honest, is not \$986 billion, which is last year's level for discretionary spending. We were more interested in something like, I would say not \$986 billion but about \$1.05 trillion, something like that. Something like that, in trillion dollars.

So about another \$70 billion—that was our number. The House had their number. We agreed to the House number. We said: OK, we agree on the num-

ber. Now let's figure out how long we are going to fund the government at the same level as last year.

Then the ship ran aground.

Our friends over in the House said: That is not enough. We also want to defund Obamacare, the Affordable Care Act.

This is not like a proposed bill, this is a law. I was here in the Finance Committee when we debated it, amended it, argued it, reported it out, and here when we voted on it and then the President signed it. It is law. The President ran for reelection on this and was reelected. We pretend it was a landslide reelection. The electoral vote was fairly big, but it was a reasonably close election. But he won, and he won fair and square. When you look at the Electoral College, he won by quite a bit.

It has been litigated in the courts. The Supreme Court looked at the one area that some people think is unconstitutional; that is, the idea of having a so-called individual mandate. They said it is constitutional. Where did we get the idea? We got it from Massachusetts. And who was the Governor that signed the Massachusetts law into effect? The Republican Presidential nominee, who then turned around and ran away from his own idea in the Presidential election last year. I think there is some irony to that.

Then, on October 1, this week, what happened? I think some good news happened, and the good news is there are 40 million people in our country who didn't have health care who had a chance to sign up for something new and different. It is not socialism, it is not communism, it is not government-run health care. It is a Republican idea called the exchange, the health marketplace. And my understanding is that when HillaryCare was discarded in the early part the Clinton administration, the Republican counterproposal to HillaryCare was something like a large purchasing pool, which in the health care exchange we call the marketplace today.

On October 1, all over this country 40 million people who didn't have health care coverage had a chance to start signing up for health care in a large purchasing pool in their State, with a variety of options, health insurance companies competing with each other, driving down costs—in my State, tens of thousands of people; States like Wisconsin, probably hundreds of thousands of people; other States like North Dakota, tens of thousands of people; but States like New York and California, millions of people who don't have health care coverage have a chance to sign up there and take advantage of

driving down the price—competition among insurers—and also taking advantage of economies of scale, driving down administrative costs as a percentage of premiums.

To buy health insurance in Delaware for families or maybe small businesses with five employees—we would pay a whole lot more money than folks are going to pay on these exchanges, these large purchasing pools. For one thing, the administrative costs are so high when you buy for yourself or a small business; however, when you are buying health insurance for tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands or millions of people, administrative costs are much lower. Competitive forces bring down the prices as well.

Our friends in the other party want to pull the plug on the efforts of 40 million people to find health care coverage for themselves. I think that is wrong. It is the law of the land. It is a done deal. It has been litigated. It is going to be with us. And I think some of our Republican friends are not afraid that it is not going to work; I think maybe they are concerned that it is going to work and it is going to actually meet the needs of people.

Abraham Lincoln, when talking about the role of government, would say: The role of government is to do for people what they cannot do for themselves.

The chamber of commerce in Sussex County in southern Delaware—a rural area—tried to set up a purchasing pool and couldn't do it. They tried it 10 years ago.

Another guy, David Osborne, in the book "Reinventing Government," described the role of government and said the role of government is to steer the boat, not row the boat. And the exchanges are really that. The idea is to create large purchasing pools, a partnership between the State and the Federal Government in many States, Delaware and others, but to then let the private sector do its job. These are great examples of government steering the boat and the private sector and other providers rowing the boat.

I would like to close with this: People say we ought to change ObamaCare, we ought to change the Affordable Care Act, make significant changes to it. I agree. And the President already made one big change 1 month or so ago when he announced that the employer mandate was going to be delayed for a whole year to give us a chance to stand up the exchanges, make sure they are working, and then to revisit this issue of the employer mandate. The coverage, if you have more than 50 employees—a year from now it will be more than 100 employees they have to cover, I think, but at least more than 50.

Some people say we have to change it right now. I want to go back in time 6, 8 years. We debated on this floor the issue of prescription drugs. Should we have a prescription drug program for Medicare? Most people said we should

have had it when we created Medicare in 1965. If we could have done as much then with pharmaceuticals as we can do now, it would have been a no-brainer. Prescription drug coverage would have been part of Medicare since its inception. But it wasn't until about 2005 that we actually got to a place where we had some agreement that this is what we ought to do. Ted Kennedy and the Democrats had one idea how to do it, and some of our Republican friends—certainly President Bush—had another one. We ended up with sort of a hybrid—a little more like President George W. Bush's idea—and a lot of our Democrats objected. They didn't say: We are going to shut down the government because we didn't get our way or because we didn't get our specific prescription drug program. They said: Why don't we figure out how to make it better?

Almost everybody has heard of the doughnut hole with respect to the Medicare prescription drug program. The way the original program worked is the first \$2,000 of pharmaceuticals for a person in Medicare Part D—Medicare paid about 75 percent of the cost. If they used over \$6,000 of prescription medicine a year, Medicare paid about 95 percent of the cost, everything over \$6,000. But roughly between \$3,000 and \$6,000—when the program was introduced and for its first half dozen or so years, if you were between \$3,000 and \$6,000 roughly in prescription medicine purchases, you got nothing from Medicare. It was all on you.

When we did the Affordable Care Act, as our friends from Rhode Island and North Dakota know, we started filling the doughnut hole. Now, if you happen to be in that gap between \$3,000 and \$6,000, Medicare pays over half and will eventually pay 75 percent. That is the way we took a good program—Medicare Part D—and we made it better, and we can do that with the Affordable Care Act, and we will.

For our Republican friends, our friend Winston Churchill once had a great quote. He used to say: You can always count on Americans to do the right thing in the end, after they have tried everything else.

This is a tough time. I feel especially bad for those Federal employees across the country who have been furloughed. We are going to bring you back, I hope, this month. My hope and belief is that we will bring you back and make sure you are made financially whole.

I say to my Republican colleagues, the next time, whether it is JOHN MCCAIN or PATTY MURRAY or somebody else who asks unanimous consent to go to conference and work out a real budget agreement, don't object. Let's accept that and get on with the work that lies ahead.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, yesterday was a scary day on Capitol Hill. I was sitting in the Presiding Officer's chair and saw the bells ring, saw

all the Capitol Police hustle our great pages in to protect them. Senator MCCAIN was speaking, and like the veteran he is he continued to make his impassioned plea for help for the Syrian opposition as things swirled around. For members of our staff and Members of the Senate and the House and all the tourists and the visitors, I think the only thing that stood at that moment between them and potential harm was the Capitol Police and the Secret Service. I was struck by that.

As a former attorney general who actually ran a law enforcement agency, I have a lot of great relationships with law enforcement people. In fact, I lost two officers in the line of duty during my tenure as attorney general, and I know the sacrifices, I know the fears of the families, and I know that every day, regardless of what is going on, some average, ordinary beautiful day can turn into a catastrophe where an officer loses their life.

As we were standing there, I was visiting with one of the officers who was protecting the pages, and she told me a story. She told me a story about a uniformed Capitol Police officer who told her that morning that he has a stay-at-home wife and she is raising their children, and he has \$115 in his checking account and doesn't know how he is going to get through this time period to the next paycheck. Even though they are here and some of them are working overtime, they are here without a paycheck and potentially might not receive a paycheck.

So today we wear these buttons that say "thank you." And I think about the hypocrisy of that. I think about the hypocrisy of buttons and galas and ribbons and all, and I want to say it is time for the Congress to not just pass out buttons that say "thank you" but pass out paychecks. That matters more. That is a real thank-you. That is real recognition of the value of those services.

So it was with great outrage that I left this body last night as we were working through the challenges, and I realized the great humor of the Capitol Police. I was leaving the building and visiting with my guys at the door. He was giving me a hard time, and I said: I want to thank you for being here every day. I want to thank you for your sacrifice. I want to thank you for the trauma your family goes through. And he said: Just think how good I would be if you actually paid me.

So I wish to say to all of my friends in the Capitol Police, who have been really truly friends—on some days I feel as if the only friendly face I see—that we care deeply. But it is not enough to wear a button. We have to start solving the problem of this impasse. We have to start recognizing that all of our people, all of our employees in the Federal Government—we have heard all day here this laundry list of let's do this and let's do this. I think we are up to 9, 10, and they are building, they are growing each one of

these lists. There should be some point when we get to the tipping point where we realize that all of the functions are important. Everybody who is out there working is important, is essential, and the best way forward is to fund government.

I want to build on what Senator CARPER has been talking about because I think it is so important. I probably was sitting in the chair the first time this happened. As most of you know, I am new to the Senate and new to these procedures. And Senator MURRAY, chair of the Budget Committee, came out and she asked to appoint a budget conference committee. I know this process fairly well. You get the big targets, and then they get passed down to the appropriators, who then build the budget within those guidelines. And the Senator from Texas stood and objected. I thought, why would you object to the appointment of a conference committee with the House and with Representative RYAN, who has been a staunch conservative and a staunch proponent of targets that I would think the Senator from Texas agreed to? There was this long back-and-forth, and then Senator MURRAY sat down and that was the end of it. I was perplexed. I thought, well, when do we get to vote on this conference committee? When do we get to kind of tell her it is OK because there are a whole lot of people in this place who agree that we should go to conference—only to find out there is something called unanimous consent.

The same people who have brought us to the brink of triggering a result of a slowdown in our economy with this behavior also have stopped the compromise. Now, adding to the hypocrisy of the day, we have the same claim for “let’s compromise.” The easy compromise here is when Senator MURRAY comes to the floor and asks for a conference committee, we all agree to start doing it, we all agree to start doing our job.

There has been a lot of attention on the so-called tea party shutdown and the tea party faction and calling them out and saying: You are a minority. But I would like to take a different tactic this afternoon, and I want to challenge the good people in the House Republican caucus who have already recognized that the best thing to do would be to pass a clean CR. I want to say I know what it is like to take a tough vote that your party doesn’t agree with. I know what it is like to feel as though you have let people down who are part of a group that is helping and moving things along and that represents, kind of, your team to some degree. I know what that is like. I have been there and I know it doesn’t feel good. But I know at the end of the day doing the right thing for what you believe your State believes in is a better feeling.

I am suggesting maybe the minority, the minority of the majority that has an opportunity to step forward and

take on this challenge and do the right thing, are those folks who know this is wrong, those folks who know over there that we could do better, that we have an opportunity to end this nonsense and move forward.

There is a procedure for doing this, as I understand it. I want to speak to those folks who I think are good-hearted, who understand the impact on families, on children, on our Native Americans. I could tell you horror stories right now, where we are looking at a snowstorm in North Dakota and many of our native families rely on fuel assistance. The people who do that are not on the job. How are they going to heat their houses in the middle of this snowstorm? This is life and death. I do not see a special provision coming across for those folks.

That is the problem when you piece-meal this. I think there are good people in the House Republican caucus who know that. If there is a way that they can in fact step forward, there will not be a lot of floor glory in their caucus. Trust me, I know. There won’t be a lot of pats on the back and it might be pretty chilly for a long time. But you will have your conscience clear knowing that you did the right thing.

I am hopeful we can get good people to step forward, to stand up to behavior that can only be described in some ways—it has been talked about as hostage-taking here. It is really bullying behavior when the small minority does this.

Let’s step forward. Let’s do the right thing. I challenge you to do the right thing on behalf of the Native Americans, on behalf of my sheriff from Fargo, who was sent home from Quantico, the premier training facility. He waited years and years to be in the queue to get that training and now has been sent home. On behalf of law enforcement, on behalf of the Capitol Police, where we, yes, honor them today by wearing these buttons, let’s honor them more by passing out paychecks.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I join my former attorney general colleague, Senator HEITKAMP, in expressing all of our appreciation for what the Capitol Police did. We all know when that event transpired, our job was to go and hunker down, stay away from windows where we might be a target, and keep out of the way and not add to the difficulty or confusion. They had a much tougher job. Their job was to go to the danger and keep the United States Capitol safe. They did their duty and they did it well.

It is now incumbent upon us to do our duty and that is to get rid of the tea party shutdown. We are now in tea party shutdown day 4. I have been watching this debate as it transpired on the floor and I have been participating a little bit in it. I have heard some interesting comments that have been made out here.

The first one is the suggestion that this is not a tea party shutdown. They say it is not a tea party shutdown, but the tea party warned of it, the tea party wanted it, the tea party is cheering it, and the tea party says they are profiting from it, that it is a big success.

When did the tea party warn of it? One example is when LYNN WESTMORELAND, the Republican from Georgia, long before this all began, told the Faith and Freedom Coalition:

This is what we are going to do. If the Government shuts down we want you with us.

The tea party wanted it.

JOE WALSH, Republican of Illinois:

Most people in my district say shut it down.

Representative JACK KINGSTON told reporters that his Georgia constituents would rather have a shutdown than ObamaCare.

Representative TIM HUELSKAMP said:

If you say government is going to shut down my constituents say, OK, which part can we shut down?

The tea party not only warned of it and wanted it, but they are cheering it.

MICHELE BACHMANN, Republican of Minnesota, said this:

We are very excited. It’s exactly what we wanted, and we got it.

She pointed out in another quote:

This is about the happiest I have seen members in a long time.

How happy are the tea partyers about the tea party shutdown? Here is what Republican Representative DEVIN NUNES said: “They are all giddy about it.”

The dictionary definitions of “giddy” say, “feeling or showing great happiness and joy. Joyfully elated, euphoric.” “Giddy” also means “lightheartedly, silly” or “dizzy” and “disoriented,” but that is another story.

Elated, giddy, exactly what we wanted—now they say they are profiting from it. Here is GOP cheerleader John Tamny, in *Forbes* magazine. I am quoting.

Republican politicians and members of the Party should cheer. . . . The Republican Party . . . decision to allow a shutdown of the federal government—

and get this—

and to ideally allow it to remain shut through the 2014 elections . . . is . . . good politics.

I will say that again:

Republican politicians and members of the Party should cheer. . . . The Republican Party . . . decision to allow a shutdown of the federal government and to ideally allow it to remain shut through the 2014 elections . . . is . . . good politics.

Echoing that sentiment we had our colleague Senator RAND PAUL the other day say, “We’re going to win this, I think.”

So the tea party warned of the tea party shutdown, the tea party wanted the tea party shutdown, the tea party is cheering the tea party shutdown. They are so happy that they are giddy. And they are claiming that their tea

party shutdown is a big success. It is a little late now to say, well, it is really not our tea party shutdown.

I have also heard colleagues come to the floor and say nothing they are doing is extremist. It is not extremist to shut down the government and make the demands they are making. One dictionary definition for extremist is "one who advocates or resorts to measures beyond the norm, especially in politics."

I would say that shutting down the U.S. Government is beyond the norm, even in politics. I would say refusing to ever allow a vote on a Senate-passed bill under the constitutional procedures that prevail between our Houses is beyond the norm. And I would say that deliberately putting hundreds of thousands of people who serve our country out of work is beyond the norm.

The norm would be for them to vote on our Senate bill over in the House. Over and over we in the Senate have voted on their House measures. We voted to strip out the extraneous measure and send back the continuing resolution. We voted to table. We followed the Constitution, we have done our duty, and we have voted. They in the House may not like that they do not win the Senate vote, but we did our duty in the Senate and have repeatedly voted on House measures.

Over in the House they have not yet once voted on the Senate measure. It is sitting on the Speaker's desk without ever a single vote. If the Speaker called up the Senate measure and allowed a vote over there in the House, it would pass and the tea party shutdown would be over. But, remember, who wants this shutdown in order to use it for bargaining leverage? The giddy folks, the folks who are so happy they have caused this, the folks who think this is good politics.

I think it is safe to say they are extremists, both by the dictionary definition and in their disregard of our traditional back and forth, one House voting on the other House's measure.

Last, and this one is particularly rich, they say we won't negotiate. Let's remember that this all began with a deal negotiated between the Speaker and the majority leader that we pass a clean continuing resolution funding the government. What did the Speaker get out of that deal? We agreed to fund the government at the Speaker's level. He actually won that negotiation. That was what was negotiated. But the Speaker did not honor the deal.

As I say, it is rich that we negotiate, we give the Speaker the funding level he wants, then he breaks the deal and now claims we won't negotiate.

One of my colleagues came to the floor a little while ago and he called to mind the radio commentator Paul Harvey. Paul Harvey used to have his catchphrase in his radio broadcast, "and now for the rest of the story." And he talked about the rest of the story. The President has made his posi-

tion very clear. It is: We will not negotiate while you are holding hostages. Open the government and we will negotiate about everything and anything. But we will not negotiate while you are holding hostages.

All the Republicans report in this Chamber is the first part: We will not negotiate. It is not a question of the rest of the story, how about the rest of the sentence? We will not negotiate while you are holding hostages. Remember that 19 times we have tried to appoint conferees to negotiate a budget between the Senate and the House and every time, the tea party extremists have stopped us. Let's remember that they do not want to negotiate. They want to negotiate with hostages. That is a very different thing. They want to negotiate with hostages, hundreds of thousands of people who serve our country whom they are using as hostages and will not let go back to work and earn their living. That is not just negotiation. There is something more than just negotiation going on when it involves hostages or other threats.

Every mom whose 4-year-old is having a tantrum over not getting what they want knows that is not just negotiation. Every 12-year-old picked on by the school bully in the school playground knows that is not just negotiation. And every businessman who is asked to pay protection money knows that is not just negotiation. There is something else going on. Ordinary Americans get the difference between negotiating in good faith, the way we have to if we had appointed conferees and went to have an actual conference between the House and the Senate about our budget, the way the rules in the Constitution propose, and negotiating with a threat or negotiating while holding hostages.

We are not going to negotiate while you are holding hostages. There are two parts to that sentence.

May I have 1 minute to conclude? I see Senator PORTMAN has arrived.

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

The majority leader said publicly he will negotiate on anything and everything as soon as the hostages are released and the tea party shutdown has ended. To now blame the majority leader for this tea party shutdown reminds me of when President Lincoln was put in such a position. When President Lincoln was accused of the very thing he was trying to prevent, he said:

That is cool. A highwayman holds a pistol to my ear, and mutters through his teeth: "Stand and deliver, or I shall kill you, and then you will be a murderer!"

That was Abraham Lincoln.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam chair, we find ourselves here in Washington with the government shutdown in place and a debt limit approaching, and I read this morning in the newspaper that a senior White House official has said

with regard to the shutdown, "We are winning . . . It doesn't really matter to us" how long it lasts.

That is not the right attitude. Today I call upon the White House to stop the political posturing, to come to the table so we can find common ground and end this government shutdown and negotiate something sensible on the debt limit. This notion that a senior White House official would say, "We are winning . . . It doesn't really matter to us" how long it lasts, shows that it is politics, not substance that matters.

It may not matter to the White House how long it lasts, by the way, but it does matter to the American people because they expect us to fulfill our constitutional duties, to get our work done, and not to take America to the brink. They expect us to do the job that we were sent here to do.

It matters, by the way, to a lot of Americans because they are being affected by it. There are 8,700 civilian employees at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base outside of Dayton, OH, who are being affected. It matters to the roughly 1,800 Ohio National Guardsmen across the State of Ohio who have been furloughed.

We can stand here and point fingers at each other as to how we got here. The truth is that how we got here is we didn't do our work. The fact that we have a continuing resolution at all, which is a continuation of funding from last fiscal year, is a mark of failure. It is a mark of failure because it means that the Congress didn't do the appropriations bills that it was supposed to do. There are 12 of them, and the idea is that Congress sits down and has hearings about the departments and agencies to provide proper oversight to the Federal Government, and then they put together appropriations bills in 12 different areas. That hasn't happened. Congress did not pass these appropriations bills in an orderly way. If they did, there would not be a continuing resolution.

We can talk about the fact that over the last 4 years, under the leadership of the majority in the Senate, we have passed exactly 1 appropriations bill out of 48, on time—1 out of 48. That was the military construction bill. I think it was in about 2011. That should be a relatively easy one to pass.

The House has done better. They have passed more appropriations bills, and they passed a budget consistently every year. This year—in the fourth year after 3 years of no budget—the Senate did pass a budget, and I applaud the Senate for that. I do support going to conference with those budgets, but the fact is that Congress has not done its work, and that is why we are here. Only 1 appropriations bill out of 48 in the last 4 years has passed this Senate on time—one.

There is another way to get around this, and we can talk about that. There is legislation called the end government shutdown bill, which simply continues funding from year to year. If we

get to September 30, and any appropriations bill is not done, it says we will have the same level of funding as the previous year, except after 120 days there is a 1 percent reduction in funding, and after another 90 days, there is another 1 percent reduction in funding, and so on. The reason is to encourage the appropriators to meet and get their work done, so we put a little inducement in there.

That legislation is bipartisan. We voted on that legislation in the Chamber earlier this year. It was supported by 46 of the 100 members. It was supported by every Republican except for two, and it was supported by three Democrats. It is my legislation, and we tried to bring this up as an amendment last week on the continuing resolution. It would have made all the sense in the world. Instead of us having this discussion we are having now in the context of a government shutdown, if we had passed the end government shutdown amendment to the CR last week, we would continue funding from last year knowing it would be reduced by 1 percent in 120 days, which gives us plenty of time to get the appropriations together, and then another 1 percent after 90 days, and another 1 percent after the next 90 days.

We wouldn't be sitting here today in the situation of a government shutdown had we passed that. The majority refused to allow that amendment to even come up for a vote. I don't know if we could have passed it or not. Again, 46 of us supported it last time. My sense is, given the fact that we were heading toward a government shutdown, we could have gotten a majority of this body to support that. But we don't know because, as is the case so often, the leadership here blocks amendments, so we never had the opportunity to have our voices be heard as Senators.

Without a doubt, there is plenty of blame to go around, but whatever brought us to this point, it is where we are. I can promise this: As long as the White House and the majority in this Chamber continue to refuse to talk about it and negotiate, and as long as they refuse to attempt to find common ground—any common ground—we are not going to make progress. As long as they treat it as a political opportunity, one to score political points, then we are not going to be able to move forward. It is a failure of leadership because governing is about talking, negotiating, discussing, debating, and then finding common ground. It is hard, but it is what we are hired to do.

We talk a lot in this Chamber about this notion of finding common ground, and I support it strongly. We don't do it enough. But to find common ground, you have to step off your own territory and on to some territory in the middle, and that requires negotiations. It requires sitting down with both parties and talking. It is what the American people, by the way, want us to do. They do it in their lives every day. We do it

in our marriages and in our businesses. Yet, there is this unbelievable quote from this morning that I talked about by some senior official at the White House saying, "We are winning . . . It doesn't matter to us" how long it lasts.

We have legislation coming over from the House to this Chamber that says: Let's have a conference. That is the conference between the House and the Senate. So there is a formal process where we have conferees over here—people to represent the Senate, Republicans and Democrats, and to represent the House, Republican and Democratic conferees. They come together and discuss, in this case, the continuing resolution and the debt limit, and that was tabled here. In other words, the majority here did not want to move to conference, so they blocked it. To me that seems to be the wrong approach. Let's have a conference and a discussion.

By the way, this is on top of a hard-line position the President has taken, and I have talked about this over the last month because the President has been saying it for the last month. He has refused to talk about or negotiate on the debt limit. That is coming up in only a couple of weeks. As important as the government shutdown debate is, in my view, the debt limit discussion is even more important because it puts our country's economy at risk.

I don't think we should be taking a position on anything if we don't talk, but certainly not on the debt limit discussion. The irony, which has been pointed out by others, is that we have a President of the United States who says he will negotiate with President Putin of Russia, but he will not talk with the Speaker of the House who is in the other party. To me it is irresponsible. It is a failure of leadership, and I don't think it is sustainable. I hope it is not.

By the way, the President has said he refuses to talk about the debt limit because we should just extend the debt limit without any preconditions, without any reduction in spending, without even any discussion of what should go along with a debt limit extension. That, my friends, is not consistent with the historical precedent either. Every President, Republican and Democrat alike, has engaged in negotiations and discussions about the debt limit, in part, frankly, because the debt limit is a hard vote. The folks I represent back home get it. For them it is kind of like the credit card. Their deal is: OK, Congress has once again gone over their limit on their credit card.

I have to be careful which credit card I hold up. I am not advertising for any particular one. This happens to be a MasterCard.

They are saying: Before you guys extend the limit on the credit card, let's deal with the underlying problem. It's kind of like if your teenager puts you, as a parent, in a position of having gone over the line on the credit card.

We have teenagers here who I am sure have never done that. Your parents would probably say, after they rip up the credit card, let's get at the underlying problem, which is the spending problem. Why are we spending more than we are taking in to the point we have to keep extending the limit on this credit card?

The American people get it. That is why every President—Republicans and Democrats alike—has had to come to Congress and say: OK, how are we going to work together to extend this debt limit while also dealing with the underlying problem, which is the fact that we are spending too much? But this President refuses to do it.

I have gone back and looked. For the last 3 decades the debt limit discussion is the only thing that has led to Congress doing anything substantial on spending. This is a period at which Congress has consistently spent more than it has taken in. Congress and the Presidents—Republican and Democrat alike—have led the country into deficits and debt. We are now at historic levels. This year the debt is just under \$17 trillion. We are in uncharted territory. This year it is higher than ever. Yet this President is saying, unlike other Presidents, that he refuses to even talk about it.

I will tell you what has happened. Over the last 30 years, every substantial deficit reduction has come in the context of a debt limit debate. Some may remember Gramm-Rudman back in the 1980s. It was considered historic legislation at the time, when we had smaller deficits and a much smaller debt. But it provided rescissions—across-the-board spending cuts. It was bipartisan. It came out of a debt limit discussion.

In 1990, when President George H.W. Bush, the first President Bush, went out to Andrews Air Force Base, with Republicans and Democrats alike, to negotiate a budget agreement, it was in the context of a debt limit discussion. The pay-go rules that many Democrats now talk about favorably came out of the discussion about the debt limit.

The 1997 balanced budget agreement with Newt Gingrich and Bill Clinton that ended up leading to the balanced budget we got a couple of years later came out of a discussion about the debt limit. Most recently, of course, the Budget Control Act came out of a discussion about the debt limit.

So this notion that Presidents never talk about or negotiate on the debt limit is just not accurate in terms of our history. In fact, just the opposite is true. It is the only time we have been able to reduce spending.

I see the distinguished majority leader is on the floor, so I will be short.

We need to figure out how to come together. The President needs to engage. It is time to govern. If the President refuses to talk, we will not be able to come to an agreement. If he does engage, as history has shown us, tough decisions can be made.

I have gone through a litany of times when we have done it. I have also talked about the fact that this year we have a bigger debt than ever, a bigger deficit than any of those historical examples I gave. Therefore, there is a greater need than ever for us to come together and find that common ground.

Mr. WICKER. If the Senator would yield for a moment. I think the distinguished majority leader is going to make a procedural motion which will take only a moment, and then I have a question for my distinguished friend from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. I will be happy to yield.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the period for morning business be extended until 5 p.m., and that all the provisions under the previous order remain in effect.

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

Mr. REID. Madam President, I appreciate my two friends for yielding for this consent agreement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, as far as I am concerned, my distinguished friend from Ohio can still have the floor. I only wanted to take a moment to congratulate him on his remarks and to observe that when it comes to budget matters, he knows whereof he speaks. He not only has a distinguished record in the House of Representatives, but he is a leader in being a budget hawk and was an opponent of additional debt in the House of Representatives, and has had a distinguished career in the Office of Management and Budget. So I thank the distinguished Senator.

It may be that he has already asked for an opinion piece from today's Wall Street Journal to be printed in the RECORD.

Mr. PORTMAN. I have not.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD at this time an opinion piece written by Kevin Hassett and Abby McCloskey on page 23 in today's Wall Street Journal entitled "Obama Rewrites Debt-Limit History."

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

[From the Wall Street Journal, Oct. 3, 2013]

OBAMA REWRITES DEBT-LIMIT HISTORY (By Kevin Hassett and Abby McCloskey)

As the government shutdown continues, the nation gets closer and closer to the day—probably Oct. 17—when Washington hits the debt limit, and with it the specter of default. President Obama may be getting nervous about what will happen to his negotiating position as that day approaches.

He keeps asserting that the debt limit has never been used "to extort a president or a government party." Treasury Secretary Jack Lew is selling the same story, saying

"until very recently, Congress typically raised the debt ceiling on a routine basis . . . the threat of default was not a bargaining chip in the negotiations."

This is simply untrue. Consider the shenanigans of congressional Democrats in 1989 over Medicare's catastrophic health coverage provision.

In this case, the problem was political infighting within the Democratic Party between the House and the Senate. "Weeks of political maneuvering brought the government to the brink of financial default," the New York Times wrote on Nov. 8 of that year. The debt limit was raised just hours before all extraordinary measures to avoid default were exhausted. The final bill dropped any action on Medicare but included a measure to repeal 1986 tax rules barring discrimination in employer-paid health insurance plans.

The Obama administration's campaign to make the debt limit appear non-negotiable might reflect concern that Republican congressional strategy might actually work. Six out of 10 Americans say "it is right to require spending cuts when the debt ceiling is raised, even if it risks default," according to a Sept. 26 Bloomberg poll. (Only 28% say "the debt ceiling should be raised when necessary, with no conditions.")

One thing is certain: The debt limit has been a powerful negotiating tool in the last several decades. It has enabled the passage of important additional legislation.

According to the Congressional Research Service, Congress voted 53 times from 1978 to 2013 to change the debt ceiling. The debt ceiling has increased to about \$16 trillion from \$752 billion. Of these 53 votes, 29 occurred in a Congress run by Democrats, 17 in a split Congress, and seven in a Republican-controlled Congress.

While large increases that give the U.S. Treasury a healthy amount of borrowing space happen occasionally, small short-term increases are common. In 1990 alone, while Republican George H.W. Bush was in the White House, a Democratic-controlled Congress voted to increase the debt limit seven times.

Congressional Republicans who want legislative conditions in exchange for a debt-limit increase are following a strategy that has been pursued by both parties the majority of the time. Of the 53 increases in the debt limit, 26 were "clean"—that is, stand-alone, no strings-attached statutes. The remaining debt-limit increases were part of an omnibus package of other legislative bills or a continuing resolution. Other times, the limit was paired with reforms, only some of which were related to the budget.

In 1979, a Democratic Congress increased the debt limit but required Congress and the president to present balanced budgets for fiscal years 1981 and 1982. In 1980 the debt limit, again increased by a Democratic Congress, included repeal of an oil-import fee. In 1985, the debt limit that was raised by a divided Congress included a cigarette tax and a provision requiring Congress to pursue an alternative minimum corporate tax in the next year.

Most recently, a divided Congress that passed the 2011 debt-limit increase included the Budget Control Act which aimed to reduce the deficit by \$2.4 trillion over 10 years and included the automatic budget sequester that kicked in on Jan. 1.

As the finger pointing begins, it is important to keep this history in mind. All told, congressional Democrats have been responsible for 60% of the "dirty" increases when the debt limit was raised alongside other legislative items. Republicans were responsible for 15%. The remaining 25% occurred during divided Congresses.

Of the Democratic dirties, six occurred when Democrats also controlled the White House, and 10 occurred when a Republican controlled the White House. For Republicans, all four occurred while a Democrat held the presidency.

Debt-limit votes often have been contentious, but on the whole they serve an important function. First, they force painful votes by legislators who would prefer to offer supporters free lunches through unfunded spending programs. Without these votes, politicians of both parties would have a significantly easier time ignoring fiscal discipline.

Second, debt-limit votes have provided a regular vehicle for legislation. Divided governments have a difficult time passing anything. Since the consequences of government default are so severe, debt-limit legislation has always passed in the end, and it has often included important additional legislative accomplishments.

Third, the debt limit has provided significant leverage to the minority party and has been a check on the power of the presidency.

Republicans today are playing a role that has been played many times. While the debt-limit kabuki inevitably roils markets as deadlines approach, the alternative absence of fiscal discipline would make government insolvency more probable in the fullness of time.

Trying to separate ObamaCare from the debt limit, President Obama has asserted that his health law has "nothing to do with the budget." His argument is eagerly echoed by an at-best ignorant media. The Affordable Care Act was passed under "reconciliation"—a legislative process that is used only for budget measures and which limits congressional debate.

The notion that legislation passed as part of a budget might be reconsidered as part of subsequent budget legislation should be uncontroversial. Perhaps that is why the administration has staked so much on its misrepresentation of history.

Mr. WICKER. I thank the Presiding Officer.

This article points out in a very detailed and annotated way a number of times when this Congress has made policy changes, important, far-reaching policy changes, in connection with negotiations on the debt ceiling increase.

So I join my friend from Ohio in saying it is absolutely incumbent on this Senate—Republicans and our friends on the Democratic side of the aisle—as well as Members of the House of Representatives and the President of the United States, our Commander in Chief, to, once again, negotiate in good faith.

The President may feel we are entirely unreasonable in our position. Frankly, there have been times during my 19 years in the House and now in the Senate when I felt the Chief Executive was completely wrong in his viewpoint on how we should address our national debt. But at no time in my recollection have the parties been simply unwilling to sit down and talk at all or to have meetings in the White House and in those meetings to basically say we are not going to make counterproposals or to say publicly: Why should I offer them anything at all? I think the American people see that is an unworkable approach.

So I point out to my colleagues, and I thank the Senator from Ohio in