

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, let me start off by acknowledging an article which appeared in today's New York Times attributed to the Senate Chaplain, Dr. Barry Black, who led us in prayer to open the Senate's session. It is entitled "Give Us This Day, Our Daily Senate Scolding," and it goes on to talk about the prayers which Dr. Black, our Senate Chaplain, has offered during the course of the last week during the government shutdown. They say in the article the morning invocation has turned into a daily conscience check for the 100 men and women of the Senate.

The article points out that in the course of one of his prayers Dr. Black said:

Remove from them that stubborn pride which imagines itself to be above and beyond criticism. Forgive them the blunders they have committed.

I can't match his baritone voice and delivery when it comes to these prayers, but I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD this article as a tribute to our Senate Chaplain who has been given the awesome responsibility to prove the power of prayer during the midst of a government shutdown.

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

[From the New York Times, Oct. 6, 2013]

GIVE US THIS DAY, OUR DAILY SENATE
SCOLDING

(By Jeremy W. Peters)

WASHINGTON.—The disapproval comes from angry constituents, baffled party elders and colleagues on the other side of the Capitol. But nowhere have senators found criticism more personal or immediate than right inside their own chamber every morning when the chaplain delivers the opening prayer.

"Save us from the madness," the chaplain, a Seventh-day Adventist, former Navy rear admiral and collector of brightly colored bow ties named Barry C. Black, said one day late last week as he warmed up into what became an epic ministerial scolding.

"We acknowledge our transgressions, our shortcomings, our smugness, our selfishness and our pride," he went on, his baritone voice filling the room. "Deliver us from the hypocrisy of attempting to sound reasonable while being unreasonable."

So it has gone every day for the last week when Mr. Black, who has been the Senate's official man of the cloth for 10 years, has taken one of the more rote rituals on Capitol Hill—the morning invocation—and turned it into a daily conscience check for the 100 men and women of the United States Senate.

Inside the tempestuous Senate chamber, where debate has degenerated into daily name-calling—the Tea Party as a band of nihilists and extortionists, and Democrats as socialists who want to force their will on the American people—Mr. Black's words manage to cut through as powerful and persuasive.

During his prayer on Friday, the day after officers from the United States Capitol Police shot and killed a woman who had used her car as a battering ram, Mr. Black noted that the officers were not being paid because of the government shutdown.

Then he turned his attention back to the senators. "Remove from them that stubborn pride which imagines itself to be above and

beyond criticism," he said. "Forgive them the blunders they have committed."

Senator Harry Reid, the pugnacious majority leader who has called his Republican adversaries anarchists, rumps and hostage takers, took note. As Mr. Black spoke, Mr. Reid, whose head was bowed low in prayer, broke his concentration and looked straight up at the chaplain.

"Following the suggestion in the prayer of Admiral Black," the majority leader said after the invocation, seeming genuinely contrite, "I think we've all here in the Senate kind of lost the aura of Robert Byrd," one of the historical giants of the Senate, who prized gentility and compromise.

In many ways, Mr. Black, 65, is like any other employee of the federal government who is fed up with lawmakers' inability to resolve the political crisis that has kept the government closed for almost a week. He is not being paid. His Bible study classes, which he holds for senators and their staff members four times a week, have been canceled until further notice.

His is a nonpartisan position, one of just a few in the Senate, and he prefers to leave his political leanings vague. He was chosen in 2003 by Senator Bill Frist, a Tennessee Republican who was the majority leader at the time, from a group of finalists selected by a bipartisan committee. Before that he ministered in the Navy for nearly 30 years.

"I use a biblical perspective to decide my beliefs about various issues," Mr. Black said in an interview in his office suite on the third floor of the Capitol. "Let's just say I'm liberal on some and conservative on others. But it's obvious the Bible condemns some things in a very forceful and overt way, and I would go along with that condemnation."

Last year, he participated in the Hoodies on the Hill rally to draw attention to the shooting death of Trayvon Martin. In 2007, after objections from groups that did not like the idea of a Senate chaplain appearing alongside political figures, he canceled a speech he was scheduled to give at an evangelical event featuring, among others, Tony Perkins of the conservative Focus on the Family and the columnist and author Ann Coulter.

Mr. Black, who is the first black Senate chaplain as well as its first Seventh-day Adventist, grew up in public housing in Baltimore, an experience he draws on in his sermons and writings, including a 2006 autobiography, "From the Hood to the Hill."

In his role as chaplain, a position that has existed since 1789, he acts as a sounding board, spiritual adviser and ethical counselor to members of the Senate. When he prays each day, he said, he recites the names of all 100 senators and their spouses, reading them from a laminated index card.

It is not uncommon for him to have 125 people at his Bible study gatherings or 20 to 30 senators at his weekly prayer breakfast. He officiates weddings for Senate staff members. He performs hospital visitations. And he has been at the side of senators when they have died, most recently Daniel K. Inouye of Hawaii in December.

He tries to use his proximity to the senators—and the fact that for at least one minute every morning, his is the only voice they hear—to break through on issues that he feels are especially urgent. Lately, he said, they seem to be paying attention.

"I remember once talking about self-inflicted wounds—that captured the imagination of some of our lawmakers," he said. "Remember, my prayer is the first thing they hear every day. I have the opportunity, really, to frame the day in a special way."

His words lately may be pointed, but his tone is always steady and calm.

"May they remember that all that is necessary for unintended catastrophic con-

sequences is for good people to do nothing," he said the day of the shutdown deadline.

"Unless you empower our lawmakers," he prayed another day, "they can comprehend their duty but not perform it."

The House, which has its own chaplain, liked what it heard from Mr. Black so much that it invited him to give the invocation on Friday.

"I see us playing a very dangerous game," Mr. Black said as he sat in his office the other day. "It's like the showdown at the O.K. Corral. Who's going to blink first? So I can't help but have some of this spill over into my prayer. Because you're hoping that something will get through and that cooler heads will prevail."

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I picked up the newspaper, at least went online to look at the newspapers from Illinois this morning, and two stories jumped right off the page. One was in the Bloomington Pantagraph. What a great story it is and makes me so proud to be from the Midwest and to represent people who are, by their very nature, pretty darned extraordinary. It is a story that comes out of Lexington, IL, about an event that happened yesterday, and I will quote just a bit of it.

More than 60 area farmers, truckers and their families gathered north of Lexington on Sunday morning to pay back a friend who had helped them out at one time or another during his 71-year lifetime. Some 16 combines harvested more than 300 acres of corn as friends of Dave Thomas brought in Thomas' last harvest. Thomas died of a heart attack on July 22 and his wife Sharon and four sons, decided to end the family's farm operations.

The article went on to say how it broke the family's heart to give up this family farm, but these neighbors pitched in. They wanted to harvest David Thomas' land and to make sure that last crop was brought in for his family. It is the kind of compassion and caring and family and community which we see in many States, but I see over and over in my home State of Illinois.

This is not unique. It happens often, and every time it does it is worthy of note because it is such a special comment on the people of this great Nation and their caring for their neighbors.

The area farmers in Chenoa, not too far from Lexington, are planning a similar harvest operation for another neighbor, David Harrison, this morning. Dave passed away last week.

Time and again these farm families put aside their own physical comfort, their own daily schedules, their own lives to help one another. It is such a wonderful comment on this great Nation that we call home and the area I am so proud to represent.

The second article that jumped off the page after I read this came out of Kansas—Wichita, KS—and it quotes Tim Peterson. He is a wheat farmer. I am not as familiar with wheat as I am corn and soybeans, but he started talking about the problems he is running into. His problems are created by us because Tim doesn't have access to vital agricultural reports. They are casualties of the Federal Government shutdown. We stopped publishing this information, and farmers such as Tim

Peterson and others are forced to make some very important family decisions, some important financial decisions without the necessary information.

These reports can alert them to shortfalls in overseas markets or if there is a wide swing in acres planted, both of which might prompt U.S. growers to plant extra crops to meet demand or hang on to a harvest a little longer to get a better price.

Here are these farmers across the Midwest who have worked hard to reach this point in the harvest where they can make enough money to live and to plant another year, to sustain their families and communities around them, and they have a problem. The problem is the politicians in Washington who want to shut down the government.

What a contrast: farmers who rallied in Lexington, IL, for the family of a fallen farmer, to show they would stand by him through thick and thin and help him out—at least his family out through this adversity—and then this article and story in Kansas, where the Congressmen and Senators sent to Washington to do their job and to provide the basic information for these farmers have failed and in failing have made it much more difficult for these farmers.

Two articles in the morning papers from the central part of the United States of America, which brings home to me the graphic human side of this government shutdown. Something else brought it home personally. When HARRY REID, our majority leader, announced we weren't going to have votes on Saturday or Sunday, I took the opportunity to get out of town and I raced off to be with my grandkids.

I have two twin grandchildren, 22 months old, and I just love them to pieces. I thought getting away with them is exactly what I need, to get out of this town and to get my mind straight after a tough political week. We had a ball. We did the normal things one would expect: going to the park and reading "Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?" and all the things that are fun for a grandfather.

There were a couple moments, though—you see, they are almost 2 years old, and there were a couple moments during the weekend where one of them would lose it for just a little while and start crying and screaming uncontrollably and saying the word "no" over and over again and unable to express themselves because they just don't have the vocabulary to tell us what is on their minds. In those moments I felt as though I was back in Washington again.

The terrible twos temper tantrums sounded like Congress—people shouting no, screaming uncontrollably, and unable to express what they are doing and why they are doing it, and that is where we find ourselves today.

On the morning talk shows yesterday, on Sunday, a number of leaders came to speak, and of course everybody

was focused on Speaker BOEHNER because he is the captain of the ship when it comes to the government shutdown, but it was interesting to me that what guided this government shutdown last week—ObamaCare, the health care reform bill—they were not talking about so much anymore. It has been launched, and 9 million people across America have visited the Web site because they are interested in finding health insurance maybe for the first time in their lives or health insurance they can afford—9 million.

Because so many have come to these Web sites, the Republican leader is right, we have had trouble getting them moving forward. It will take a few days to adjust to this volume of people coming on board to find out whether this insurance exchange can help them, their family or the business. The good news for my colleague Senator MCCONNELL, from Kentucky, is that his State has been a real success story, with 8,000 people having already signed up in Kentucky for health insurance on the insurance exchange of ObamaCare.

I hope Senator MCCONNELL and Senator RAND PAUL take some pride in the fact that now 8,000—at least 8,000—Kentuckians have health insurance they can afford and they can trust, some of them for the first time in their lives. When I hear this news, I wonder how these Senators from Kentucky and some other States can say we want to repeal this, we want to get rid of this.

What are they going to tell those 8,000 families who finally have health insurance for the first time? Big mistake. Sorry. Go back to the marketplace where you have no health insurance protection. That is hardly the response Americans want to hear in Kentucky, Illinois, in Maine or any other State.

What we are trying to do with ObamaCare, the health care reform act, is to open up an opportunity for 40 to 50 million Americans to have health insurance they can afford for the first time in their lives. What we have heard from the other side of the aisle is: Repeal it. Defund it. Delay it. Do anything you can to stop it. Stop it.

You know why they want to stop it? Because they understand that once people's appetites are whetted for health care insurance they can afford and insurance where they can protect their families, there is no turning back. We are at a point in history, much as we were with the creation of Social Security and Medicare, where we are offering to families across America something they could not do by themselves and something they will value very much as part of their families and their future, and that is what is driving this fear on the other side of the aisle. That is what is driving the government shutdown.

What is worse is October 17, the next deadline, and it is not that far away. In another 9 or 10 days we are going to face a debt ceiling expiration. The debt

ceiling is basically America's mortgage. We have to extend our mortgage. We borrow money to manage our government, to fight wars, to pay our military, to do the most basic things. When we borrow that money, we have to have authorization from the government. That is the debt ceiling.

Many of the same Senators and Congressmen who voted for this spending now will not vote to pay the bill. That is akin to eating the big meal at the restaurant and, when the waiter brings the check, saying: I ain't paying. How long would that last? That is what many are suggesting when they say we are not going to extend the debt ceiling. They have eaten the meal. They just don't want to pay the bill.

It would be the first time in the history of the United States we would default on our national debt. The first time we would basically violate the full faith and credit of the United States of America. It has its consequences. The last time the tea party did this, America's credit rating suffered. What happens when our credit rating suffers? The interest rates we pay go up. Taxpayers are paying more to China and countries that loan us money than they are paying to educate children, to build roads or do medical research.

Here we go again. Another threat by the Speaker that we are going to default on our national debt again. They threatened it 2 years ago, and they have come back again—the tea party. This is totally irresponsible.

I read the newspapers from different countries and they look at the United States and shake their head and they wonder how this country, which many say—and I can certainly see the reason for it—is one of the leaders in the world, can find itself in this manufactured political crisis again and again and again. It is like the temper tantrums of the terrible twos when we hear this. We think it is totally unnecessary. We have to help these kids grow up and get through it. America has to grow up and stand and say to Congress: It is time for you to grow up and stand and do the right thing for the future of this country.

I hope we can do this, and I hope we can do it together in a bipartisan fashion. This shutdown of the Federal Government should end today. The Speaker has before him a continuing resolution which he could pass, could pass in a heartbeat, and the government would be extended. The farmer out in Kansas would have the information he needs, the medical researcher would be back to work at the National Institutes of Health, and all of the agencies of the government would be functioning for the good of the American people. That is what we were sent to do. There are no excuses and no political reasons not to.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I wish to thank the distinguished Senator

from Illinois, the distinguished majority whip, for bringing up Chaplain Barry Black's name and the article that appeared in the New York Times. I know Senator DURBIN and I do a lot of things together. One of those things is just about every Wednesday morning we attend the Senate Prayer Breakfast. Replete through all of Barry's prayers at that breakfast is always one word, and that is "humility." I think the message in that article in the New York Times and the message in the prayers in the last 7 or 8 days in the Senate and the message to all of us right now is that we need to grasp a little humility and find common ground among consternation and move this country forward.

To that end, I want to make my suggestion, for what it is worth, and I want to make mine as an inspiration with Senator COLLINS, the other Senator from the State of Maine who last week made her proposal. If we can't find common ground with the arguments we have today, let's proffer a new proposal to give us a chance to solve our problem.

SUSAN COLLINS made a great suggestion, to replace the medical device tax with other revenue so it doesn't cut the revenue and to get back to sequestration but only by cutting defense agencies, not by cutting across the board. That made a lot of sense. It provides a way to absorb those cuts but does so in a professional way.

So I come to the floor in a Robert Frost moment. You know the poem:

"Two roads diverged in a yellow wood. . . . I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference."

We have been traveling down the wrong road for far too long. We are here today, in large measure, arguing over a CR we shouldn't have to be arguing over. Had we been doing our appropriations and doing our budgets over the last 4 years, the money would have been spent, the regular order would have been in place, the fiscal year moneys would have been appropriated, and there would be no need for a CR.

There is bipartisan responsibility for not having done a budget or an appropriations act. The leadership, obviously, controls the floor, so they can bring the appropriations act forward and that is their responsibility. But we have also cried out on our side for a budget. Year after year, let's have a budget. Now we have a budget, one approved by the House and one approved by the Senate, but an inability to go to conference because we can't get agreement on preconditions. Once again, this is another situation of not negotiating over something that is important to the American people.

So I have a suggestion, a suggestion that two-thirds of this Senate agreed to in the budget debate we had in March, a decision that 20 States have exercised in our country that has made them better, a decision the State of Israel made 2 or 3 years ago when they

got into such dire financial conditions and went to the World Bank for suggestions; that is, let's force our CR and add to it a simple resolution that changes our way of doing business to a biennial budget and appropriations act, where we force ourselves to appropriate over 2 years and not 1, and make those appropriations in the odd-numbered years so that in the even-numbered years we do only oversight.

It would make a lot of difference for the American people if we were arguing over not how much bacon we were bringing home but how much money we were saving through oversight, savings, and fiscal accountability. I have introduced that legislation, along with Senator SHAHEEN—a Democrat from New Hampshire and a Governor who ran a State under a biennial budget. It makes sense, it is humble, it is the right way to do business, and it ends this necessity of having continuing resolutions at the last minute because we didn't do our job.

Let's face it. We are here today in the conundrum we are in because we did not do our job. We did not pass a budget and go to a conference committee, we didn't have appropriations acts, so we are doing a continuing resolution into a new fiscal year. That is no way to run the greatest country on the face of this Earth. Four years and running we have shirked our responsibility. It is time for a new day in the Senate. It is time for a biennial budget. It worked for Israel. If it worked for 20 States, it will work for us. It establishes priorities, it ends waste, fraud, and abuse, and it brings about good decisions.

Last night on "60 Minutes," Senator TOM COBURN from Oklahoma was featured, and the feature was about SSI disability and the fact that we now pay \$135 billion a year in SSI disability payments—a trebling of those costs in just a few years—and fully 25 to 40 percent we know is fraudulent. Twenty-five to forty percent is \$40 to \$60 billion. You can do a lot with \$40 to \$60 billion. That is where transparency and oversight works.

There is nobody better than the Senator from Oklahoma in terms of oversight and nobody more humble than the Senator from Oklahoma, but when he knows he is right, he is going to work hard to do what is right, and that is what all of us should be doing.

Referring to the Senator from Oklahoma, I go back to the Workforce Investment Act, which Senator MURRAY and I are working very hard to bring to the floor. In that, Senator COBURN found forty-four duplicative job training programs in nine different agencies—over and over again. We are appropriating money forty-four different times to nine different agencies to do workforce training when we really only ought to be doing one. If we were budgeting on a 2-year basis and doing other oversight in even-numbered years, there would be no limit to the successes we could have, the transparency

we could enforce, the agreements we could come to, and the lack of cliff management we are in today.

The debt ceiling we face in about 10 days is a debt ceiling we face because we are having to borrow more money to run our government. We are having to borrow more money to run our government because we are not doing fiscal accountability, we are not doing appropriating, and we are going to continue for that to grow and grow.

As a businessman and a saver, I know what the time value of money is. The time value of money means that if you put away a little bit of money every year and save for your kids' education, for your health care, or whatever it might be, when the time comes and you need it, you will have it. But I also know what the time cost of money is: when you are borrowing money to pay off borrowed money—and that is where we are in the United States of America today. So that is why this debt ceiling crisis is such a big issue.

I would submit, and humbly, that the Shaheen-Isakson legislation that forces us to do our regular order of business of appropriating, forces us to budget, and forces us to do it every year puts us back to the kind of discipline and job responsibility we really need around this place. Instead of arguing about what we can't agree upon, we ought to find common ground and run our country's household the way American families run their households. If we had to do here in Washington what every American family has to do year in and year out, this place would be a whole lot different.

It is time that we find humility, find common ground, do what 20 of the 50 States do, do what the State of Israel has done, and do what 67 Senators said we ought to do in the budget debate back in March; that is, pass a biennial and appropriations act, end this foolishness, and gain back some of the humility we richly deserve.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed 2 extra minutes to pay tribute to a physician in my county.

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

(The further remarks of Mr. ISAKSON are printed in today's RECORD under "Morning Business.")

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of my time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Georgia for his call on this place to get back to regular order and to bridge our differences. I think it is an important one and a noble and hopefully easy request for us to ultimately follow.

I came down here this weekend to talk about a young woman in Bridgeport, CT, who is at the epicenter of the fallout of this shutdown, and I wanted to come back down on Monday to tell her story very briefly once again because the way a lot of trade papers

cover this shutdown makes it seem as if this is just about politics. If you listen to some commentators and some members of the tea party crowd in the House of Representatives, they will tell you that what we are going to find in this shutdown is that everybody is going to learn that the government really doesn't do that much and it is not that big a deal if it goes away for a couple of months, a couple of weeks, a couple of days.

What we are finding as we enter week 2 of this shutdown is we have now moved past the point where the collapse of the government is just an inconvenience. It is now ruining lives. I wish Melanie Rhodes was the exception, but she is increasingly becoming the rule across the country. The Presiding Officer heard me tell her story this weekend, but I am going to do it again.

Melanie was homeless a couple years ago. She lives in the southwestern portion of Connecticut. She had hit really hard times, but she decided to pull her life together—not the least of the reasons being that she has a little boy. She has a son Malachi. Malachi was born about 2 months premature, so he was born with some developmental disabilities that luckily, because of a government program, were caught early on. The program is called Birth to Three. In Connecticut, it is our early intervention program. Most States have it. It is one of the programs that are going to run out of funds pretty soon if we don't start turning back on the faucet to State governments.

But even more important to Melanie was that through that early intervention screening program that figured out Malachi needed a little bit of extra help, they got him into a Head Start Program. He wasn't even 1 year old when he started the Head Start Program. Today he is 3, and he is making incredible progress. He has some serious issues. He is just now learning how to communicate with some signs he has been taught. But he is doing better and doing better every single day.

On Monday night of last week Melanie stayed up all night watching to see whether the government was still going to be operating because she knew the Bridgeport Head Start Program works on a fiscal year that matches ours. So if the government shut down on October 1, the check wouldn't come to Bridgeport Head Start and they would have to send 1,000 kids home.

But she also knew her life was starting to get brighter in other ways as well. She had been looking for a job for a long time and she had done everything we asked of her. She had applied to everybody she could think of, from Walmart to Walgreens to McDonald's, and hadn't found anything until a bus company decided to hire her as a driver. She had gone through her training; she was just waiting for her background check to come back. It was going to be OK and she was going to

start work. But, of course, the only way she could start work was if she had care for her child. As she has said so eloquently over the past week, she can't just leave Malachi with anybody because he is a kid with substantial difficulties and his caregivers need to know how to take care of him. So if there is no Head Start, there is no school for Malachi, he regresses in terms of the progress he has made, and she can't start her job. Her family essentially collapses around her simply because this place can't pass a budget. That is what is happening to Melanie, and she says simply this: We need our government and our businesses open. Why should we suffer and be held hostage while government can't do what they need to do?

Her story can be repeated thousands of times across Connecticut. I think I saw today that about 18,000 Head Start slots are going to be closed by the end of this week. Unfortunately, her story is not the exception; it is becoming the rule. This is what this shutdown means. It is not playacting. It is real.

As I watched some of the shows over the weekend, I heard a familiar refrain from our Republican colleagues. They said: Yeah, we have this demand that we want the health care law delayed or repealed or defunded in order to get the government up and operating, but really it is the Democrats. It is HARRY REID, it is President Obama who won't sit down and negotiate. If they would just sit down and negotiate, then we could end this whole thing.

I understand how some people might watch and think to themselves, why won't the Democrats just sit down and talk about this? So I would like to address this claim that the only thing stopping us from reopening the government is Democrats won't talk to Republicans. I want to address that in five simple ways.

First, I would make the point that every single one of my colleagues has made: We have already talked. What we thought we were talking about was a continuing resolution, a temporary budget that would keep the government operating for about 6 weeks. A lot of Democratic critics actually would argue that we didn't really negotiate that well over that particular issue because in the end the Senate passed a budget with a particular number for the continuing resolution, the House passed a budget with a particular number for the continuing resolution, and the difference was pretty substantial, but in the end the Senate just decided to go with the House number. We didn't settle in between. We didn't settle closer to ours or closer to theirs. We just took the House number. So we kind of feel, on the subject at hand, which is the continuing resolution, that the negotiation has already happened and we gave the House everything they wanted. There is not much more to negotiate after you give them everything when it comes to the bottom-line number in the continuing resolution.

Second, it is kind of hard to have a negotiation when only one side is making demands. We don't have any demands in this negotiation. All we want is for the things that normally happen to continue to happen—i.e., we want the government to stay open on the exact same terms the government was open last week and the week before. We want the country to pay our bills just as we have paid our bills for a generation. It is only Republicans—and, frankly, not all Republicans. Most Republicans in the Senate are not making these demands. It is mainly a small handful in the House and the Senate who say: In order to keep the government open, we want the health care law defunded or repealed or delayed.

It is difficult to have a negotiation when all we want is the status quo.

It is kind of like if two people lived in a house and one of them said: I am going to take the roof off the house if you don't do what I want. You wouldn't really negotiate that. That is an unreasonable demand. The roof just needs to be there. It is something that, for good reason, is normally not the subject of debate or negotiation. And you wouldn't settle for half. You wouldn't allow your roommate to take half the roof off. The roof just needs to be there, and if you are angry with me about something or you want to talk about something, let's do it while the roof is still on.

We can't negotiate over the government just operating. We can't negotiate over whether or not we are going to pay our bills. We don't want anything. We just want things to happen as they have happened in the past.

Third, this place just can't operate if in order to keep the government open for 6 weeks we have to satisfy everybody's personal political agenda.

I also said this weekend I have things I believe in very strongly. I represent Sandy Hook, CT. I submit I feel just as strongly about background checks as the Senator from Texas does about the repeal of the health care bill. But it would be unreasonable for me to say I am not going to vote for a budget because I don't get my way on background checks or immigration reform or tax fairness or whatever it may be that I care about outside the confines of the continuing resolution. If all 100 Senators had to get their particular nonbudgetary political points settled as a requirement of passing a continuing resolution, this place would absolutely collapse.

Maybe that is what some people want. Maybe some people want government to collapse and the government to shut down. But when I hear people talk on this floor, I take them at face value, that that is not what they want. Ultimately we all cannot get what we need all the time.

Fourth, you normally need to compromise when you do not have consensus, when you do not have agreement, when both the Senate and the House do not have the majority of

their Members agreeing to the exact same thing. In that case you need to negotiate because clearly we do not have consensus, and so we have to get two sides together to find consensus.

We have consensus. We have a bill the majority of Senators supports, the majority of House Members supports, the President is ready to sign the minute it gets to his desk. That is what is referred to as a clean continuing resolution, a bill that would keep the government operating for the next 6 weeks on the same terms it was operating beforehand. The only reason why that is not law today is because Speaker BOEHNER will not bring that up for a vote in the House of Representatives. But it reportedly enjoys the support of more than 216 Members of the House, which is what you need today to get that bill passed. It has already passed the Senate.

Last, as Senator DURBIN talked about, what Republicans are demanding as their condition to keep the government up and operating is no less than the repeal of the signature achievement of President Obama's first term, the most important bill I have ever worked on, the most important vote I have ever cast. That is the health care law which is today saving millions of dollars for senior citizens in their Medicare benefits and right now is providing a lifeline to millions of Americans who need cheaper insurance.

It is why poll after poll tells you that although people are still split on whether they agree with the exact prescription for our health care economy laid out in the bill we passed, they sure as heck do not want us to repeal the law. By about a 2-to-1 margin people say don't repeal the law, let it go into effect, give it a shot. It is also why by a 3-to-1 margin people do not agree with shutting down the government over the repeal of the health care law. It is why 9 million people have gone onto the Federal health care reform Web site to see what their options are. It is why, as Senator DURBIN said, even in States such as Kentucky, people are signing up by the thousands. In the first day of Connecticut's exchange we had more visits to the Web site than we had in the entire month previous. People are desperate for lower cost health care out there. Sick people and families with sick children have been waiting lifetimes to finally be able to get insurance for their loved ones.

People need this health care reform law to go into effect. It is simply not true, as the Senator from Texas and others have said, that people do not want this law. They have shown us how badly and desperately they need it by the flood of interest in the exchanges over the first week, and in poll after poll the American people say loudly they do not want this repealed.

It is hard to get major social change passed in this town. The Founding Fathers intentionally set up a process by which something such as health care

reform seems nearly impossible. That is why it took 100 years since Teddy Roosevelt first proposed that we guarantee access to our health care system for all Americans for it to happen.

You have a lot of chances for that idea to crater. You need both Chambers to pass the exact same bill, you need a President willing to sign it, you need the courts to uphold it, and then you need the electorate to confirm it when everybody who voted for it stands for reelection again.

The reason why we are implementing the health care law today and the reason why most Americans want it to go forward is we passed every single one of those tests. For the first time in a hundred years the exact same proposal to reform our health care system passed with a majority of both the House and the Senate and was signed by our President. The Supreme Court reviewed the law and stamped that it was constitutional. Then this President and every Member of the Senate who voted for the health care bill went out to stand for reelection in 2012, based on the promise they would continue to implement the law. The President was re-elected by a resounding margin and every Senator in this Chamber who voted for the health care law won reelection. The bill passed, the courts upheld it, voters confirmed their original choices. People want this law.

We already compromised on the amount in the continuing resolution. It cannot be much of a negotiation when all we want is for the government to stay up and operating and for us to pay our bills. This place cannot work if, every time you negotiate a budget, everybody has to have their own political priorities taken care of.

We do not need to negotiate because we already have a bill that enjoys the support of both Chambers and will be signed by the President if only the House of Representatives will call it for a vote. The idea that people do not want the health care law simply is not borne out either by the polls or by people's conduct on the exchanges over the last 2 weeks.

Melanie Rhodes is waiting for an answer from us. Malachi needs to get back into preschool, ASAP. He is a little autistic boy who, every single day he sits home by himself, is marching a little bit more quickly backward off the progress gained through this program, funded not by government but by all of us, because we thought it was important that little boys with autism growing up in poor families with moms who used to be homeless should have a chance at success in life. Every day we continue to reverse our collective decision as a society that Malachi should get some help, he goes backward and backward. His mom, to whom we said: You know what. Pick yourself up by your bootstraps, do the right thing for yourself and your child—she did it. She got him into Head Start, she found a job, and now because that program is shut down, she likely will not be able

to start her job. He moves backward. She moves backward.

It is not because Democrats will not negotiate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Connecticut for those eloquent and very powerful remarks, and I will take advantage of his presence here to perhaps engage in a colloquy, if he agrees to doing so, asking him, because he spoke so wonderfully about that one family, whether he has seen, as I have seen, that story of deprivation and setback duplicated on a bigger scale throughout our State?

Mr. MURPHY. I thank my colleague from Connecticut for the question. As he knows, there are a thousand different children in that one Head Start Program alone who have essentially lost access to childcare. This week I think the number is, as the Senator knows, about 18,000 kids across the country who will lose access to health care. As we have seen, it has already had a big effect in our State because we have so many defense manufacturers. Some of the initial furloughs to civilians have caused a loss of work among families who could not afford it. We are seeing over and over how this shutdown trickles down.

Frankly, it is affecting the very families who cannot afford to miss a paycheck, the very families who cannot make quick arrangements to find somebody else to take care of their autistic child. As the Senator has seen and knows, this is affecting, in our small State, thousands and thousands of residents who did not have a lot of wiggle room when it came to the support that was standing around them due to programs run by the Federal Government.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. In fact, I think statistics show more than a thousand children and their families are directly affected by this shutdown in Head Start alone. Seniors, in terms of nutritional assistance—I do not know whether my good friend and very distinguished colleague from Connecticut has seen that phenomenon as well in Bridgeport and throughout our State of Connecticut and would care to remark on it?

Mr. MURPHY. I would say to the Senator, we have had this effort on behalf of Republicans to kind of pick and choose which parts of the government they are going to reopen. As I noted here on the floor in objecting to one of these piecemeal requests, that exact program my colleague referred to, the senior nutrition program which provides meals to very low-income and often very frail seniors who are getting them either at a senior center or delivered to them through the Meals On Wheels Program, was not initially one of the programs that Republicans chose to reopen.

That is why we object to this piecemeal approach. It is bad policy to allow

for a wing of this House or the other House to pick and choose which people they help, leaving on the outside, as the Senator mentioned, some who are very deserving, such as very frail and often very hungry senior citizens.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. What is needed, I think my colleague would agree, is an end to the shutdown, reopening government—not for the sake of reopening the government but to provide these vital services and assurance that the United States of America, the greatest Nation in the history of the world, is going to continue paying its debts. Then and only then have a conference and a compromise and collaboration on what our overall budget should be with smart spending cuts and increases in revenue that close some loopholes and subsidies. I think that was the thrust, was it not, of what my colleague from Connecticut had to say?

Mr. MURPHY. I think the majority leader made it very clear he is willing to sit down to talk about everything and anything the Republicans want to discuss but not with a gun to our heads. Let's reopen the government. Then, as we as a Chamber have been willing to do over and over, let's sit down in a budget conference with everything part of that budget on the table.

But this just cannot happen every time that one faction of one House does not get their way, they shut down the government until their particular demands are remediated.

As I was saying, Senator BLUMENTHAL and I care deeply about the issue of background checks. He worked his entire life on this issue. But given his life's work, he is still not coming to this Chamber and demanding until he gets his way on that issue, which is of such vital importance to his constituents and mine, that he will shut down the government.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. In fact, what is happening is a small fraction of one House of the Congress—in fact, in the House of Representatives, one small group of rightwing extremists, whatever they may characterize themselves as—is holding hostage the entire House of Representatives, the entire Congress, the entire government, even though it is only one branch and one part of a branch. I think Senator MURPHY has explained well our view—and our constituents in Connecticut need to know it—we are willing to compromise and collaborate but not with hostage-taking tactics that in effect say to everyone else in the country: It is our way or the highway.

I thank my colleague from Connecticut for speaking so clearly and persuasively on his topic, and for giving the impact of this government shutdown a human face and a human voice. The story he told from Bridgeport has indeed thousands of others just like it across the State of Connecticut, across the country, who are suffering the real hardship and harm of this shutdown.

We can talk in the abstract here. Our rhetoric may carry a little bit beyond these four walls. But the real-life consequences belong to them. Both Senator MURPHY and I have seen them in real life and that is why we are here to advocate and fight for those people of Connecticut, in Bridgeport, those families who depend on Head Start, those seniors who depend on nutritional assistance—he has told their story, and that of Sikorsky, so well today in this Chamber. These men and women, and their families, do great work for our Nation on their assembly lines.

Black Hawk helicopters are the best-made helicopters in the Nation. They perform rescue operations for our troops in Afghanistan. They medevac our Nation's warriors to places where they can be saved. They provide resupply and provisions. They are literally lifesaving vehicles in our war to keep America safe.

Those workers in Sikorsky were told late last week: You are done. You are furloughed. Do not report to work next week because 45 inspectors—civilian employees of the U.S. Department of Defense—are going to be furloughed. The 45 inspectors and 1,500 or 2,000 or more workers at Sikorsky who work on the Black Hawk helicopter assembly line, and other product assembly as well, were told they were going to be furloughed.

Senator MURPHY and I, and other members of our delegation, spoke with officials of the Department of Defense. We made our interpretation of the recently passed law clear to them and told them that it applies to employees of the Defense Contract Management Agency whose services were vital to certify and inspect those helicopters. We needed to keep the assembly lines at Sikorsky open in order to make sure that Black Hawk helicopters were continuing to be available to our military men and women who depend on them so vitally.

Those conversations—and I am sure others had them as well—with officials at the Department of Defense, along with the action of the House over the weekend, will make sure that all of the furloughed employees who work for the U.S. Government will eventually be paid.

Secretary Hagel was persuaded to do the right thing. I commend and thank Secretary Hagel for bringing back those employees, such as the 45 DCMA inspectors, who have to be there for the Department of Defense in order to take delivery of those helicopters, which, in turn, is necessary to keep the assembly line open and keep Sikorsky workers employed and on the job with the countless other hard-working men and women defense contractors across the United States.

I thank Secretary Hagel, but at the same time we need to recognize that for every Sikorsky helicopter situation, for every Fortune 500 corporation, and for every one of those big defense contractors, there are literally thou-

sands of suppliers and small businesses that are continuing in uncertainty, and sometimes confusion, about what is happening here in Washington.

There are thousands of other businesses that depend on those suppliers because they provide the raw materials for the parts for the Sikorsky helicopters. The ripple effect and the ramifications pervade our economy and our society. The uncertainty creates harm and hardship that is immeasurable and perhaps irreparable.

The harm is not only to those workers who rightly have whiplash from being furloughed one day and being called back another and then being uncertain as to what impact this shutdown will ultimately have; there are suppliers and the countless other small businesses that cannot plan, cannot look ahead, cannot hire for the future, and sometimes they have to tell their workers: You are going to be furloughed. You cannot plan to buy a car or a new home or even the most minor things such as school supplies—or make other plans, for that matter.

Lives hang in the balance; lives are at stake. The real-life consequences are real and perhaps lasting for many Americans—not only the family who depends on Head Start or the senior nutrition assistance or the jobs in Sikorsky, but there are countless others whose lives also hang in the balance.

There is a solution to this impasse. Calmer minds, cooler heads, and common sense are beginning to reach a consensus that the House should be given a chance to vote, and that the Speaker of the House of Representatives, JOHN BOEHNER, should enable that vote. He should very simply provide an opportunity to Republicans and Democrats—not singling out one side or the other—to come together on a bipartisan basis.

Who cares who is in the minority of that vote as long as it reopens the government and provides Head Start, nutritional assistance, and enables some certainty that permits our economy to move forward rationally and sensibly so we can recover from the great recession? We need to grow jobs and enable the economy to reach some measure of prosperity. We all have an interest in that outcome. We should all be pulling for America. We should all be assured that the greatest nation in the history of the world will leave no doubt that it will pay its bills on time and that it will fulfill its obligations on time, just as we have for every year in the history of this great Nation.

There is a way to come together. I have heard from my colleagues on both sides of the aisle that the time has come to end this impasse. Simply let the House vote.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Vermont.

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

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

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, all over this country the American people are outraged by what is going on here in Washington. They have a hard time understanding why rightwing extremists in the Republican Party in the House are able to shut down the U.S. Government, while paychecks are being denied to millions of Federal employees and, at the same time, services—in some cases desperately needed services—are being threatened for tens of millions of Americans. People are hurting and they wonder what is going on.

Let me say a few words regarding what, in my view, has, in fact, happened. From the beginning, some of my Republican colleagues are saying: We just need to talk. Let's compromise. A key point they neglect to make is that a major compromise has already taken place. The Democrats in the Senate—and I am an independent, as is the Presiding Officer, affiliated with the Democratic Caucus—decided to send a budget for a continuing resolution to the House, which, in my view, was a very, very weak budget, one that I am totally dissatisfied with, and I think most Members of the caucus are. It continues the budget at sequestration levels which will have a devastating impact on this country. It is a bad budget. But the reason the majority leader sent it over to the House was that he was of the understanding that the Speaker of the House had requested that type of budget, and that once that budget came over—once that CR came over—the House would agree to it. In fact, let me read from an article in the Washington Post today commenting on an ABC interview that Speaker BOEHNER did. The Washington Post says:

In the ABC interview, Boehner tacitly acknowledged making a deal with Senate Democrats to avoid using the threat of a shutdown to attack ObamaCare in exchange for an agreement to maintain the deep cuts known as the sequester through the fall. He conceded that his rank and file forced him onto the path to shutdown by insisting on waging the fight over ObamaCare.

That was the Washington Post today.

What does that mean? It means that an agreement had been reached by the Speaker and the majority leader that if the Democrats accepted the very low budget number the Republicans wanted, there would be a clean continuing resolution. What this article points out—and what I think the Speaker has virtually acknowledged—is that despite his agreement with the majority leader here in the Senate, he couldn't carry it out because his extreme rightwing said: Thanks. You got us the budget we wanted, the CR we wanted. That is not enough. Now we want to end ObamaCare.

That is where we are today.

So anyone who comes forward and says: Why don't you talk? Why don't

you compromise? The fact is—and I think the majority leader has made this point—he compromised far more than many of us felt comfortable with.

A compromise has already been reached. The Democrats accepted, in my view, a very bad and weak Republican budget. But it was done with the hope and the understanding that there would be a clean continuing resolution and that the U.S. Government would not be shut down. That is point No. 1.

Point No. 2 is that the other day the Speaker said on TV that there are not the votes to pass a clean CR. What I have been hearing here on the floor of the Senate and in the House is that we have Republicans who are not sympathetic to ObamaCare, they don't like ObamaCare, and they would like to defund ObamaCare. But they understand we don't shut down the U.S. Government. We don't threaten that for the first time in the history of the United States we may not pay our bills, be a deadbeat Nation, and drive our economy and our financial system, and perhaps the entire world's financial system, into a catastrophic area by not paying our bills. We believe that there are enough Republicans in the House to join with Democrats and pass a clean CR.

The President and the majority leader have both made this point: Have the vote. Have the vote, Mr. Speaker. Maybe you are right or maybe you are not. But we don't know until you have the vote. I urge, as I have before, that the Speaker of the House function as the Speaker of the House of Representatives and not as the speaker of the Republican Party.

The last point I wish to make touches on an article that appeared in yesterday's New York Times. It is a very important article because it really tells us who is behind this shutdown and what their motives are. If anybody thinks this government shutdown or the threats about not paying our bills and driving the world's economy into catastrophic areas are ideas that just occurred the other day, that a Senator just had this bright idea, they would be very mistaken. The fact is we have a growing rightwing movement in this country funded by some of the wealthiest people in America, including the Koch brothers, a family that has made their money in fossil fuels and are worth over \$70 billion—\$70 billion is their worth. They are worth \$70 billion, and they have access to the best health care in the world. They have access to the best housing in the world. Their family members can go to the best colleges and universities in the world. Yet they are obsessed with, among other things, making sure 25 million Americans have no health insurance at all.

I am a strong supporter of a Medicare for all, a single-payer program. I don't think the Affordable Care Act went far enough. But to say the least, 20 million or 25 million Americans can finally have access to health insurance. They can go to the doctor when they need to

go to the doctor. There are now no regulations that prevent them from getting care because of a preexisting condition. Can we imagine billionaires—billionaires—going to war against working people so they and their kids cannot get health insurance? I think that is just obscene. That is just obscene.

Let me quote from The New York Times article of yesterday. It is important that people understand that the fight against the Affordable Care Act is just the tip of the iceberg. We have families and billionaires such as the Koch brothers who not only want to see that we don't expand health insurance in this country, but they have a long list of issues they are going after. In fact, they want to repeal virtually every major piece of legislation passed in the last 80 years that protects the middle class, working families, women, children, the elderly, the sick, and the poor. That is their agenda. So it is not a question of opposing the extension of health insurance through ObamaCare; that is not enough for them. What they want to do is end Medicare as we know it right now, and transform it into a voucher system, that gives an elderly person who is dealing with cancer \$8,000 and says: Good luck to you.

They want to make massive cuts in Medicaid. They don't want to expand Medicaid. They want massive cuts. They are very clear about wanting to end Social Security. They don't believe the Federal Government should be involved in retirement issues and Social Security.

One of the more amazing things these guys want to do—and many of our Republican colleagues apparently drank the lemonade on this issue—is to abolish the concept of the minimum wage. The Federal minimum wage now is \$7.25 an hour. People can't live on that. But their idea is to get the Federal Government out of the minimum wage issue—no floor—so that if an employer in a hard-pressed area in Maine or in Vermont or in Michigan can pay people \$4 an hour, they think that is freedom: People have the freedom to work for \$4 an hour. We don't want a minimum wage.

So, in other words, these rightwing extremists and the big money behind them have a major agenda, of which repealing ObamaCare is just one small part.

Let me just quote, if I might, the New York Times article. I ask unanimous consent to have the entire New York Times article printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the New York Times, Oct. 5, 2013]

A FEDERAL BUDGET CRISIS MONTHS IN THE PLANNING

(By Sheryl Gay Stolberg and Mike McIntire)
WASHINGTON.—Shortly after President Obama started his second term, a loose-knit coalition of conservative activists led by former Attorney General Edwin Meese III

gathered in the capital to plot strategy. Their push to repeal Mr. Obama's health care law was going nowhere, and they desperately needed a new plan.

Out of that session, held one morning in a location the members insist on keeping secret, came a little-noticed "blueprint to defunding Obamacare," signed by Mr. Meese and leaders of more than three dozen conservative groups.

It articulated a take-no-prisoners legislative strategy that had long percolated in conservative circles: that Republicans could derail the health care overhaul if conservative lawmakers were willing to push fellow Republicans—including their cautious leaders—into cutting off financing for the entire federal government.

"We felt very strongly at the start of this year that the House needed to use the power of the purse," said one coalition member, Michael A. Needham, who runs Heritage Action for America, the political arm of the Heritage Foundation. "At least at Heritage Action, we felt very strongly from the start that this was a fight that we were going to pick."

Last week the country witnessed the fall-out from that strategy: a standoff that has shuttered much of the federal bureaucracy and unsettled the nation.

To many Americans, the shutdown came out of nowhere. But interviews with a wide array of conservatives show that the confrontation that precipitated the crisis was the outgrowth of a long-running effort to undo the law, the Affordable Care Act, since its passage in 2010—waged by a galaxy of conservative groups with more money, organized tactics and interconnections than is commonly known.

With polls showing Americans deeply divided over the law, conservatives believe that the public is behind them. Although the law's opponents say that shutting down the government was not their objective, the activists anticipated that a shutdown could occur—and worked with members of the Tea Party caucus in Congress who were excited about drawing a red line against a law they despise.

A defunding "tool kit" created in early September included talking points for the question, "What happens when you shut down the government and you are blamed for it?" The suggested answer was the one House Republicans give today: "We are simply calling to fund the entire government except for the Affordable Care Act/Obamacare."

The current budget brinkmanship is just the latest development in a well-financed, broad-based assault on the health law, Mr. Obama's signature legislative initiative. Groups like Tea Party Patriots, Americans for Prosperity and FreedomWorks are all immersed in the fight, as is Club for Growth, a business-backed nonprofit organization. Some, like Generation Opportunity and Young Americans for Liberty, both aimed at young adults, are upstarts. Heritage Action is new, too, founded in 2010 to advance the policy prescriptions of its sister group, the Heritage Foundation.

The billionaire Koch brothers, Charles and David, have been deeply involved with financing the overall effort. A group linked to the Kochs, Freedom Partners Chamber of Commerce, disbursed more than \$200 million last year to nonprofit organizations involved in the fight. Included was \$5 million to Generation Opportunity, which created a buzz last month with an Internet advertisement showing a menacing Uncle Sam figure popping up between a woman's legs during a gynecological exam.

The groups have also sought to pressure vulnerable Republican members of Congress with scorecards keeping track of their health

care votes; have burned faux "Obamacare cards" on college campuses; and have distributed scripts for phone calls to Congressional offices, sample letters to editors and Twitter and Facebook offerings for followers to present as their own.

One sample Twitter offering—"Obamacare is a train wreck"—is a common refrain for Speaker John A. Boehner.

As the defunding movement picked up steam among outside advocates, Republicans who sounded tepid became targets. The Senate Conservatives Fund, a political action committee dedicated to "electing true conservatives," ran radio advertisements against three Republican incumbents.

Heritage Action ran critical Internet advertisements in the districts of 100 Republican lawmakers who had failed to sign a letter by a North Carolina freshman, Representative Mark Meadows, urging Mr. Boehner to take up the defunding cause.

"They've been hugely influential," said David Wasserman, who tracks House races for the nonpartisan Cook Political Report. "When else in our history has a freshman member of Congress from North Carolina been able to round up a gang of 80 that's essentially ground the government to a halt?"

On Capitol Hill, the advocates found willing partners in Tea Party conservatives, who have repeatedly threatened to shut down the government if they do not get their way on spending issues. This time they said they were so alarmed by the health law that they were willing to risk a shutdown over it. ("This is exactly what the public wants," Representative Michele Bachmann of Minnesota, founder of the House Tea Party Caucus, said on the eve of the shutdown.)

Despite Mrs. Bachmann's comments, not all of the groups have been on board with the defunding campaign. Some, like the Koch-financed Americans for Prosperity, which spent \$5.5 million on health care television advertisements over the past three months, are more focused on sowing public doubts about the law. But all have a common goal, which is to cripple a measure that Senator Ted Cruz, a Texas Republican and leader of the defunding effort, has likened to a horror movie.

"We view this as a long-term effort," said Tim Phillips, the president of Americans for Prosperity. He said his group expected to spend "tens of millions" of dollars on a "multifront effort" that includes working to prevent states from expanding Medicaid under the law. The group's goal is not to defund the law.

"We want to see this law repealed," Mr. Phillips said.

A FAMILIAR TACTIC

The crowd was raucous at the Hilton Anatole, just north of downtown Dallas, when Mr. Needham's group, Heritage Action, arrived on a Tuesday in August for the second stop on a nine-city "Defund Obamacare Town Hall Tour." Nearly 1,000 people turned out to hear two stars of the Tea Party movement: Mr. Cruz, and Jim DeMint, a former South Carolina senator who runs the Heritage Foundation.

"You're here because now is the single best time we have to defund Obamacare," declared Mr. Cruz, who would go on to rail against the law on the Senate floor in September with a monologue that ran for 21 hours. "This is a fight we can win."

Although Mr. Cruz is new to the Senate, the tactic of defunding in Washington is not. For years, Congress has banned the use of certain federal money to pay for abortions, except in the case of incest and rape, by attaching the so-called Hyde Amendment to spending bills.

After the health law passed in 2010, Todd Tiahrt, then a Republican congressman from

Kansas, proposed defunding bits and pieces of it. He said he spoke to Mr. Boehner's staff about the idea while the Supreme Court, which upheld the central provision, was weighing the law's constitutionality.

"There just wasn't the appetite for it at the time," Mr. Tiahrt said in an interview. "They thought, we don't need to worry about it because the Supreme Court will strike it down."

But the idea of using the appropriations process to defund an entire federal program, particularly one as far-reaching as the health care overhaul, raised the stakes considerably. In an interview, Mr. DeMint, who left the Senate to join the Heritage Foundation in January, said he had been thinking about it since the law's passage, in part because Republican leaders were not more aggressive.

"They've been through a series of C.R.s and debt limits," Mr. DeMint said, referring to continuing resolutions on spending, "and all the time there was discussion of 'O.K., we're not going to fight the Obamacare fight, we'll do it next time.' The conservatives who ran in 2010 promising to repeal it kept hearing, 'This is not the right time to fight this battle.'"

Mr. DeMint is hardly alone in his distaste for the health law, or his willingness to do something about it. In the three years since Mr. Obama signed the health measure, Tea Party-inspired groups have mobilized, aided by a financing network that continues to grow, both in its complexity and the sheer amount of money that flows through it.

A review of tax records, campaign finance reports and corporate filings shows that hundreds of millions of dollars have been raised and spent since 2012 by organizations, many of them loosely connected, leading opposition to the measure.

One of the biggest sources of conservative money is Freedom Partners, a tax-exempt "business league" that claims more than 200 members, each of whom pays at least \$100,000 in dues. The group's board is headed by a longtime executive of Koch Industries, the conglomerate run by the Koch brothers, who were among the original financiers of the Tea Party movement. The Kochs declined to comment.

While Freedom Partners has financed organizations that are pushing to defund the law, like Heritage Action and Tea Party Patriots, Freedom Partners has not advocated that. A spokesman for the group, James Davis, said it was more focused on "educating Americans around the country on the negative impacts of Obamacare."

The largest recipient of Freedom Partners cash—about \$115 million—was the Center to Protect Patient Rights, according to the groups' latest tax filings. Run by a political consultant with ties to the Kochs and listing an Arizona post office box for its address, the center appears to be little more than a clearinghouse for donations to still more groups, including American Commitment and the 60 Plus Association, both ardent foes of the health care law.

American Commitment and 60 Plus were among a handful of groups calling themselves the "Repeal Coalition" that sent a letter in August urging Republican leaders in the House and the Senate to insist "at a minimum" in a one-year delay of carrying out the health care law as part of any budget deal. Another group, the Conservative 50 Plus Alliance, delivered a defunding petition with 68,700 signatures to the Senate.

In the fight to shape public opinion, conservatives face well-organized liberal foes. Enroll America, a nonprofit group allied with the Obama White House, is waging a campaign to persuade millions of the uninsured to buy coverage. The law's supporters

are also getting huge assistance from the insurance industry, which is expected to spend \$1 billion on advertising to help sell its plans on the exchanges.

"It is David versus Goliath," said Mr. Phillips of Americans for Prosperity.

But conservatives are finding that with relatively small advertising buys, they can make a splash. Generation Opportunity, the youth-oriented outfit behind the "Creepy Uncle Sam" ads, is spending \$750,000 on that effort, aimed at dissuading young people—a cohort critical to the success of the health care overhaul—from signing up for insurance under the new law.

The group receives substantial backing from Freedom Partners and appears ready to expand. Recently, Generation Opportunity moved into spacious new offices in Arlington, Va., where exposed ductwork, Ikea chairs and a Ping-Pong table give off the feel of a Silicon Valley start-up.

Its executive director, Evan Feinberg, a 29-year-old former Capitol Hill aide and one-time instructor for a leadership institute founded by Charles Koch, said there would be more Uncle Sam ads, coupled with college campus visits, this fall. Two other groups, FreedomWorks, with its "Burn Your Obamacare Card" protests, and Young Americans for Liberty, are also running campus events.

"A lot of folks have asked us, 'Are we trying to sabotage the law?'" Mr. Feinberg said in an interview last week. His answer echoes the Freedom Partners philosophy: "Our goal is to educate and empower young people."

CRITICAL TIMING

But many on the Republican right wanted to do more.

Mr. Meese's low-profile coalition, the Conservative Action Project, which seeks to find common ground among leaders of an array of fiscally and socially conservative groups, was looking ahead to last Tuesday, when the new online health insurance marketplaces, called exchanges, were set to open. If the law took full effect as planned, many conservatives feared, it would be nearly impossible to repeal—even if a Republican president were elected in 2016.

"I think people realized that with the imminent beginning of Obamacare, that this was a critical time to make every effort to stop something," Mr. Meese said in an interview. (He has since stepped down as the coalition's chairman and has been succeeded by David McIntosh, a former congressman from Indiana.)

The defunding idea, Mr. Meese said, was "a logical strategy." The idea drew broad support. Fiscal conservatives like Chris Choccola, the president of the Club for Growth, signed on to the blueprint. So did social and religious conservatives, like the Rev. Lou Sheldon of the Traditional Values Coalition.

The document set a target date: March 27, when a continuing resolution allowing the government to function was to expire. Its message was direct: "Conservatives should not approve a C.R. unless it defunds Obamacare."

But the March date came and went without a defunding struggle. In the Senate, Mr. Cruz and Senator Mike Lee, a Utah Republican, talked up the defunding idea, but it went nowhere in the Democratic-controlled chamber. In the House, Mr. Boehner wanted to concentrate instead on locking in the across-the-board budget cuts known as sequestration, and Tea Party lawmakers followed his lead. Outside advocates were unhappy but held their fire.

"We didn't cause any trouble," Mr. Choccola said.

Yet by summer, with an August recess looming and another temporary spending bill

expiring at the end of September, the groups were done waiting.

"I remember talking to reporters at the end of July, and they said, 'This didn't go anywhere,'" Mr. Needham recalled. "What all of us felt at the time was, this was never going to be a strategy that was going to win inside the Beltway. It was going to be a strategy where, during August, people would go home and hear from their constituents, saying: 'You pledged to do everything you could to stop Obamacare. Will you defund it?'"

Heritage Action, which has trained 6,000 people it calls sentinels around the country, sent them to open meetings and other events to confront their elected representatives. Its "Defund Obamacare Town Hall Tour," which began in Fayetteville, Ark., on Aug. 19 and ended 10 days later in Wilmington, Del., drew hundreds at every stop.

The Senate Conservatives Fund, led by Mr. DeMint when he was in the Senate, put up a Web site in July called dontfundobamacare.com and ran television ads featuring Mr. Cruz and Mr. Lee urging people to tell their representatives not to fund the law.

When Senator Richard M. Burr, a North Carolina Republican, told a reporter that defunding the law was "the dumbest idea I've ever heard," the fund bought a radio ad to attack him. Two other Republican senators up for re-election in 2014, Lamar Alexander of Tennessee and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, were also targeted. Both face Tea Party challengers.

In Washington, Tea Party Patriots, which created the defunding tool kit, set up a Web site, exemptamerica.com, to promote a rally last month showcasing many of the Republicans in Congress whom Democrats—and a number of fellow Republicans—say are most responsible for the shutdown.

While conservatives believe that the public will back them on defunding, a recent poll by the Kaiser Family Foundation found that a majority—57 percent—disapproves of cutting off funding as a way to stop the law.

Last week, with the health care exchanges open for business and a number of prominent Republicans complaining that the "Defund Obamacare" strategy was politically damaging and pointless, Mr. Needham of Heritage Action said he felt good about what the groups had accomplished.

"It really was a groundswell," he said, "that changed Washington from the outside in."

Mr. SANDERS. I thank the Presiding Officer.

Let me quote from the yesterday's New York Times:

The current budget brinkmanship is just the latest development in a well-financed, broadbased assault on the health law. Mr. Obama's signature legislative initiative. Groups like Tea Party Patriots, Americans for Prosperity, and FreedomWorks are all immersed in the fight, as is Club for Growth, a business-backed nonprofit organization. Some, like Generation Opportunity and Young Americans for Liberty, both aimed at young adults, are upstarts. Heritage Action is new, too, founded in 2010 to advance the policy prescriptions of its sister group, the Heritage Foundation.

The billionaire Koch brothers, Charles and David, have been deeply involved with financing the overall effort.

Let me repeat that.

The billionaire Koch brothers, Charles and David, have been deeply involved with financing the overall effort.

Remember, these are the guys who are worth \$70 billion, who want to essentially repeal every major piece of

legislation protecting working families over the last 80 years.

Let me go back to the article:

A group linked to the Kochs, Freedom Partners Chamber of Commerce, disbursed more than \$200 million last year—

\$200 million last year.

to nonprofit organizations involved in the fight.

Et cetera, et cetera.

Now I will go to another paragraph, which is really interesting and really important:

The groups have also sought to pressure vulnerable Republican members of Congress with scorecards keeping track of their health care votes; have burned faux "Obamacare cards" on college campuses; and have distributed scripts for phone calls to Congressional offices, sample letters to editors and Twitter and Facebook offerings for followers to present as their own.

What is going on here? What does that mean? This is what it means. As a result of the disastrous Supreme Court ruling called Citizens United, what billionaires such as the Koch brothers and others can do—and what they are doing today—is to say to Republicans in the House of Representatives: If you vote for a clean continuing resolution, if you vote to keep the government open, if you make it very clear that you will oppose any effort to see the U.S. default on its debts—if you do that, let me tell you what is going to happen to you, because we have the Koch brothers and people worth billions of dollars who are prepared to jump into your campaign, perhaps get a primary opponent to run against you, and to fund that opponent with as much money as he or she needs.

So now, what democracy in the House—as a result of Citizens United—is about is that a handful of billionaires can threaten any Member of the House with defeat by pouring in unlimited sums of money if they vote in a way that the Koch brothers do not like.

If that is how people think American democracy is supposed to function, it would surprise me very much. But that is not what American democracy is supposed to be about. That tells me again why we have to do everything we can to overturn this disastrous Citizens United Supreme Court decision so that a handful of billionaires cannot dictate public policy here in the United States of America and in the Congress.

Let me just conclude by saying this: The American people are angry and they are frustrated, and I think what they are seeing is that the middle class of this country is disappearing. In fact, in the last 24 years median family income today is lower than it was. It has gone down. You have millions of people who are out there working for wages they just cannot raise a family on. You are seeing right now a growth in poverty among elderly people. In the midst of a disappearing middle class and the increase of poverty, you are seeing more income and wealth inequality in this country than we have seen since

the 1920s. The gap between the very rich and everybody else grows wider. And now, as I mentioned a moment ago, what billionaires are doing with their money is continuing their war against the middle class by trying to repeal important pieces of legislation.

What the American people are saying is: What about us? What about us? Who is worried that my kid who graduated from high school cannot find a job? Who is worried that my other kid who graduated college is leaving school deeply in debt? Who is worried that in our country we are not being aggressive in dealing with the issue of global warming?

There are enormous issues facing the middle class in this country: the need to create millions of jobs, the need to raise the minimum wage, the need to make college affordable, the need to significantly improve childcare in this country and education in general.

There is an enormous amount of work to be done. What this Congress should not be doing is telling 2 million workers that you are not getting paid, furloughing what was then 800,000, now 400,000 workers. That is not what we should be doing.

I hope the American people stand and make it clear to our Republican friends that they cannot shut down the government because they are not getting their way. I hope the American people would do everything they can to demand that this Congress start doing its job, which is to represent working families.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise today with a pretty simple message for House leadership: You can end this Republican shutdown today. Just simply let the House vote.

On issue after issue after issue, when the House has acted, the Senate has responded with a vote, either with a vote for or against a tabling motion or a vote for or against legislation, but we have taken a vote. We simply ask the House to do the same.

By scheduling a vote on the Senate-passed plan—the continuing resolution—Speaker BOEHNER can ensure that more than 800,000 workers, including tens of thousands in my home State of Ohio, can get back to work.

By scheduling a vote on the Senate-passed bill, he can reopen the government without rehashing old political fights; then get down to business—deal with the debt limit—then get down to business and make decisions about immigration, make decisions about jobs, make decisions about what we are going to do with the budget.

I do not think we have ever, Mr. Speaker, seen one faction of one party of one chamber of one branch of government hold the entire country and economic recovery of our Nation hostage—a faction of one party of one house of one branch of government hold the country hostage.

Do not take my word for it. A Cleveland Plain Dealer headline said: “Republicans need to quit the attack on Obamacare and agree to a clean continuing resolution.” They called the actions of the far right attack on the 3-year-old health care law—the health care law that was passed overwhelmingly in both Houses, with 60 votes in the Senate and well over a majority in the House, affirmed in part by the Supreme Court—the Plain Dealer called the actions attacking the health care law “bordering on the un-American.”

The Toledo Blade called the actions of the far right in the House “GOP extortion,” challenging Speaker BOEHNER to put America’s economy over his own job, reminding him of his election night saying the 2012 election “changes that,” making the health law “the law of the land.”

Finally, the Washington Post—no stranger to criticizing Democrats—called out the “House of Embarrassment” and its “heedlessness” on the impact of its actions on ordinary Americans.

I was home this weekend, and I spoke with all kinds of people. I spoke with Federal employees, some of whom have been furloughed, some of whom have not. I spoke with others in Avon Lake, OH, other places. I listened to what they had to say. People are frustrated. They cannot believe that, again, one group of radicals in one House of one branch of government can, for all intents and purposes, shut the country down and move us towards the precipice of what happens if the Congress does not pay the bills that we as a Congress ran up. These are real people facing a real and devastating impact.

I did something else that I know the Acting President pro tempore, as a Senator from Maine, a former Governor, does also: get on the phone and just talk to people in your State about the impact this will have.

I spoke to one of the leaders of an institution in Ohio that has a large R&D presence in the State. He talked about the irreparable damage to our infrastructure, similar to what happens in Senator NELSON’s State—who just joined me on the floor—what could happen at NASA in South Florida, what happens at NASA in Cleveland, what happens at Batelle in Columbus, what happens at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton.

This leader at one of these institutions—I do not want to call him out by name—he talked about the irreparable damage to our infrastructure as a nation. This is not just highways and bridges. This is scientific researchers, this is engineers, this is people working on some of the most top secret issues in our country and our government.

He went on to say it is asymmetric: building and killing a scientific endeavor. Think about that. Killing a scientific endeavor you can do in a week or you can do in a month simply by stopping the research by an interruption like this, where many of the top scientists, the top engineers, at some point just say: I do not want to go through this again. I am not going to continue to do this important work for my country and then see it shut down because somebody has a political ax to grind, because somebody, on a continuing resolution, or one political party, as we approach the debt ceiling, wants to attach their political platform to one of these important pieces of legislation just to make the government run.

What is happening in places like that is some of these engineers say: I am not sure I want to work for NASA anymore. I am not sure I want to stay in the military. I am not sure I want to be at a major research institution like Batelle. I can go elsewhere where my work will not get interrupted and people will show their appreciation simply by continuing to fund my research.

When you think about this building and killing a scientific endeavor, it is a little bit like one old politician said, that it takes a carpenter a long time to build a barn, but any—I am not sure he used the word “mule”—but any mule can knock down that barn in a day or so.

I remember I was in a car accident years ago. I broke my back. I was in the hospital for a week. For 3 days I stayed in bed. I remember the first time I tried to walk how my muscles had atrophied. It took several weeks before I was back to full strength and could rebuild that muscle.

That is really the way it is with these research institutions in our country, which we have so many of, that are so important, whether it is NASA, whether it is Batelle, whether it is Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, whether it is the National Institutes of Health. We have assembled some of the greatest scientists and engineers and technicians in the world at these institutions, but building a scientific endeavor takes days and weeks and months and years; killing one is a matter of an interruption of 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 weeks.

That is why this is so dangerous, this shut down. That is why going up against the debt ceiling is potentially catastrophic for our country. It makes no sense. It is not good for our economy. It is not good for our people. It is not good for our Federal workforce that really can do the right kinds of things for our country.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I would be glad to yield to the Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. What the Senator said about NASA is so true. Would the Senator believe that 97 percent of the

workforce at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration is on furlough? A few of us had to intercede. The Mars mission that is supposed to go in a narrow window between mid-November and early December—if they miss that window, it would be another 2 years before they could launch that Mars mission and, therefore, you would have all the expense of keeping the scientists on, and so forth. We finally got them to bring them back so they could continue processing the mission so it can launch in that narrow 3-week window. But the rest of the people are gone.

Does that sound very intelligent to the Senator from Ohio?

Mr. BROWN. I would add, it is interesting: Three of the great NASA facilities are represented on the floor now by Senator CORNYN from Texas, Senator NELSON, and me. It is not just NASA employees at NASA Glenn in Cleveland.

Mr. NELSON. Correct.

Mr. BROWN. It is another 1,300 contractors who are doing work paid by taxpayers. They are actually private companies, as the Senator knows. It is the same in Florida, the same in Texas. And their work is important too.

I just think these kinds of interruptions are so senseless. What I heard more than anything from people when I was home was how senseless this is, how ludicrous this is.

I spoke to hospital administrators all over my State today. I was on the phone with a number of them from Williams County in the northwest corner of the State, to Columbus, to Cleveland, to all over, and it is senseless to them that they are in the midst of maybe a hospital expansion or maybe just doing the day-to-day work of the hospital, and they do not know what to think.

I have heard many of my colleagues here for years talk about the unpredictability of this economy and that it is partly because of Washington and ObamaCare or maybe Dodd-Frank: We do not know what is happening next.

The worst kind of unpredictability is shutting the government down or leading us right up to the debt ceiling. That is why it is so important that the House vote and then we get serious about doing the debt ceiling vote and then we move on to issues such as immigration and others that matter for our country.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I agree with our colleagues that a government shutdown is not the best way to do business around here. We should get together—the President, the House, and the Senate—and we should work this out, both the continuing resolution and the debt ceiling, of which Secretary of the Treasury Jack Lew has said he will basically run out of all of the extraordinary measures he can use to avoid us reaching the debt ceiling—which,

colloquially speaking, I would say is the equivalent of maxing out your credit card, the Federal Government's credit card.

But it is worth remembering that as James Baker, former Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of State, with a distinguished record of public service going back many years—he recently noted in an article in the Wall Street Journal that since 1976 we have had 17 government shutdowns temporarily until differences between the parties, between the branches could be worked out. I hope we can do that sooner rather than later.

The truth is that there was a way out with regard to the shutdown, particularly when the House passed a piece of legislation that would maintain the spending limits at \$988 billion, which was the same level the Senate majority had chosen, but it also attached two other provisions to it, one of which would have eliminated the carve-out for Congress for ObamaCare—in other words, the carve-out that treats Congress differently than the rest of the country. Our Democratic friends unfortunately voted against that provision. All Republicans voted to eliminate that carve-out.

The second was the delay in the penalties that would be applied to individuals who do not buy government-approved health insurance under ObamaCare. The President has unilaterally delayed for 1 year the penalties for employers who do not meet the requirements of ObamaCare. All we were asking is that the same consideration be given to hard-working Americans. If our friends across the aisle—or at least enough of them—had joined with us to vote for both of those provisions that came over with the House bill, the government would not be shut down, it would be operating. But that was the decision they made. I think they made a mistake.

But we know the government shutdown debate is now quickly becoming a debate over the broader subject of what we do about spending and debt, particularly what we do with regard to the debt ceiling I mentioned earlier. We have reached almost the top of our credit limit on the Nation's credit card, and President Obama is asking for another trillion dollars in spending, in debt limit. But the President differs from many of us in that he thinks this debt ceiling cap ought to be lifted by another trillion dollars without anything else attached to it. He thinks it ought to be automatic, even though we believe it is entirely appropriate—and the majority of times in the past, the debt ceiling increase has been accompanied by other long-term policy reforms. The President himself has agreed to these kinds of reforms in the past. But apparently this time he has drawn a line in the sand.

So now he believes, unlike the past, that Congress should act like a rubberstamp when it comes to raising the limit on America's credit card, our

debt limit. Meanwhile, it seems our friends across the aisle also feel the House should be a rubberstamp for the Senate. All of this leads me to conclude that James Madison, the father of the Constitution, must be rolling over in his grave because he and others of the Founders were the geniuses who decided that it was the checks and balances from separated government—the executive and the legislative, the House and the Senate—that would best protect our freedoms and best prevent overreach by other branches.

But in a way I can understand why the President and the majority leader are refusing to negotiate and are saying "it is my way or the highway." After all, the last time we had these kinds of major fiscal talks in advance of a debt ceiling deadline, the result was the Budget Control Act. That was 2011. That law produced, by default, real spending cuts and real deficit reduction. If you recall, that was where the supercommittee was created to try to negotiate a grand bargain. The supercommittee was unsuccessful, and the default was the Budget Control Act and the sequester, which automatically cut discretionary spending. Our friends across the aisle clearly think that was a big mistake. The President and the majority leader now are refusing to negotiate at all on the debt ceiling. They believe it ought to be rubberstamped.

Well, amidst all of the rhetoric and the finger-pointing, now Washington has erupted into something it does best, which is the blame game. I am afraid we have lost sight of our underlying debt problem.

Despite the short-term deficit reduction we have witnessed since 2011 due to the default position of the Budget Control Act, our long-term fiscal trajectory remains unsustainable. Last month the Congressional Budget Office projected that publicly held Federal debt is on course to exceed the size of our entire economy. By that point, again, under current law, the interest we have to pay to China and other foreign creditors that hold more than half of our debt will be 2½ times greater than the 40-year average. We know interest rates are extraordinarily and abnormally low because of the policies of the Federal Reserve. But can you imagine, for that \$17 trillion in debt on which the U.S. Government would have to pay historic averages of interest to our creditors in order to get them to buy our debt, what impact that would have? Well, I will talk about that more in a moment.

If we continue down this road without adopting real reforms for our long-term fiscal challenges, we will condemn our children and our grandchildren to fewer jobs, slower economic growth, worse opportunity, and a much greater risk of a full-blown fiscal crisis.

In the event of a crisis, our safety net programs that we all care about for the most vulnerable in our country would be cut harshly and abruptly, as would

our ability to fund national security and other priorities.

Nobody wants that kind of a future. Nobody has to accept that kind of a future if we just do our job—not the President trying to go it alone again, not the Senate saying “it is my way or the highway” to the House, but by the House and the Senate and the White House working together to try to work our way through it.

But if we continue to rack up debt—another trillion is what the President wants to raise the debt limit—and if we continue to postpone the hard choices and leave it to others, we will move closer and closer to an eventual disaster. By contrast, if we were to take the responsibility now to reform our safety net programs, we could reform them gradually so that people would barely feel it. That will make it much easier to protect the Americans who need these programs the most—our seniors and the most vulnerable in our society.

Of course, we cannot make any real progress as long as the President and the majority leader in the Senate refuse to negotiate. As I said earlier, Congress is not a rubberstamp. That is not the Constitution written by our Founders. The House of Representatives is not a rubberstamp for the Senate. We have been willing to compromise and negotiate. As a matter of fact, the House has sent over multiple bills. Every time a Member of the opposing party comes to the floor and talks about the National Institutes of Health’s funding being cut off for children’s cancer research, we have come down here and said: Well, let’s pass the bill. Let’s pass that appropriation.

When someone has said: Well, what about the veterans’ disability claims that are stacking up and are not being processed as a result of the shutdown, the House has passed legislation. We have come to the floor and offered legislation that would allow us to address that problem, but we have been told no time and time again.

I ask unanimous consent for 4 additional minutes.

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

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, we need to work together. That is the only way this is going to happen. We know it will happen. It is going to happen. The President cannot take the unsustainable position that “it is my way or the highway and I will not negotiate,” especially since he has done it before, especially since that is the only way our constitutional framework allows the resolution of problems. If we were to do—which we are not going to do—what the President and the majority leader have asked us to do, which is to raise the debt limit automatically without dealing with any of our long-term fiscal problems, we would simply be encouraging Congress and our policymakers to delay the tough choices and hard votes. We would be encour-

aging—indeed, we would be enabling—this type of fiscal profligacy that has left us with a gross national debt of \$17 trillion, which is about \$53,000 for every man, woman, and child in America.

More than \$6 trillion of debt has been added since President Obama became President of the United States. Yet the President seems to show absolutely no sense of urgency in dealing with it. That is despite his own fiscal commission, the Simpson-Bowles Commission, coming back in December 2010—that was a bipartisan commission he himself appointed—they came back with their own policy prescription to deal with this problem. Republicans, some of our most conservative Members, and some of the most liberal Members on the other side of the aisle came together and they voted for the Simpson-Bowles Commission report in December 2010, but the President simply walked away from it.

Back in March, he told ABC News:

We do not have an immediate crisis in terms of debt. In fact, for the next 10 years, it is going to be in a sustainable place.

That is what the President of the United States said last March. But that is not what his own bipartisan fiscal commission said in December 2010. That is not what the Congressional Budget Office says. As everybody around here knows, the Congressional Budget Office is the final authority on these matters. In their 2013 long-term budget outlook, on page 13, they have a couple of pages that I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

It is entitled “Consequences of Large and Growing Federal Debt.” They did not say: We do not have an immediate crisis in terms of debt, and we are pretty much in a sustainable place for 10 years.

They said:

The high and rising amounts of Federal debt held by the public that CBO projects for the coming decades under the extended baseline would have significant negative consequences for both the economy and the federal budget.

What were those? They said there would be less national savings and less future income. They said there would be pressure for larger tax increases and spending cuts to deal with this, particularly the phenomena of high interest payments that I mentioned a moment ago.

Again, because of the Federal Reserve’s policies, it costs next to nothing for the Federal Government in terms of interest on our national debt, but when that goes back up to historic averages, to 4, 5 percent, it is going to cost trillions of dollars more for us to service the existing debt, not to mention the additional trillion the President wants to borrow.

What is that going to do? Well, that is going to crowd out other priorities such as NASA, which my colleague from Florida and I both think is an important national priority. I heard the Senator from Ohio say the same. But

higher interest payments as a result of not dealing with this high debt are going to crowd out other important national priorities.

Finally, the Congressional Budget Office said there is a “greater chance of a fiscal crisis.” Specifically, what they are talking about is that as we pay more and more for interest on our national debt, we lose more and more control over our fiscal future. As we all know on a bipartisan basis, we have been told time and time again by the experts that when our creditors lose confidence in our ability to repay debt, there can come a breaking moment when all of a sudden we lose control and all of these things happen, which we can avoid if we deal responsibly today.

In other words, the President seems content to let one of his successors deal with the problem of our rising national debt—that is only, I would add, if we get lucky enough to postpone the kinds of crises and problems CBO and Simpson-Bowles project that long. The President obviously has other priorities, but I want to remind him what his own former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, ADM Mike Mullen, said when he was asked about the Nation’s biggest threat to our national security.

He said it was the national debt. The President himself has echoed those comments, but the President is still sitting on the sidelines and still takes the untenable position that he is unwilling to negotiate. At a time when the country needs genuine leadership, he is nowhere to be found.

Until that changes, we are not going to get any closer to where we need to be sooner, rather than later, and that is a true bipartisan compromise.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the article: “Consequences of Large and Growing Federal Debt.”

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

[From the 2013 Long-Term Budget Outlook, Sept. 2013]

CONSEQUENCES OF LARGE AND GROWING FEDERAL DEBT

The high and rising amounts of federal debt held by the public that CBO projects for coming decades under the extended baseline would have significant negative consequences for both the economy and the federal budget. Those consequences include reducing the total amounts of national saving and income; increasing the government’s interest payments, thereby putting more pressure on the rest of the budget; limiting lawmakers’ flexibility to respond to unexpected events; and increasing the likelihood of a fiscal crisis.

LESS NATIONAL SAVING AND FUTURE INCOME

Large federal budget deficits over the long term would reduce investment, resulting in lower national income and higher interest rates than would otherwise occur. The reason is that increased government borrowing would cause a larger share of the savings potentially available for investment to be used for purchasing government securities, such as Treasury bonds. Those purchases would “crowd out” investment in capital goods,

such as factories and computers, which make workers more productive. Because wages are determined mainly by workers' productivity, the reduction in investment would also reduce wages, lessening people's incentive to work. In addition, both private borrowers and the government would have to pay higher interest rates to compete for savings, and those higher rates would strengthen people's incentive to save. However, the rise in private saving would be a good deal smaller than the increase in federal borrowing represented by the change in the deficit, so national saving would decline, as would private investment. (For a detailed analysis of those economic effects, see Chapter 6.)

In the short run, though, large federal budget deficits would tend to boost demand, thus increasing output and employment relative to what they would be with smaller deficits. That is especially the case under conditions like those now prevailing in the United States—with substantial unemployment and underused factories, offices, and equipment—which have led the Federal Reserve to push short-term interest rates down almost to zero. The effects of the higher demand would be temporary because stabilizing forces in the economy tend to move output back toward its potential level. Those forces include the response of prices and interest rates to higher demand, as well as (in normal times) actions by the Federal Reserve.

PRESSURE FOR LARGER TAX INCREASES OR SPENDING CUTS IN THE FUTURE

Large amounts of federal debt ordinarily require the government to make large interest payments to its lenders, and growth in the debt causes those interest payments to increase. (Net interest payments are currently fairly small relative to the size of the federal budget because interest rates are exceptionally low, but CBO projects that those payments will increase considerably as rates return to more normal levels.)

Higher interest payments would consume a larger portion of federal revenues, resulting in a larger gap between the remaining revenues and the amount that would be spent on federal programs under current law. Hence, if lawmakers wanted to maintain the benefits and services that the government is scheduled to provide under current law, while not allowing deficits to increase as interest payments grew, revenues would have to rise as well. Additional revenues could be raised in many different ways, but to the extent that they were generated by boosting marginal tax rates (the rates on an additional dollar of income), the higher tax rates would discourage people from working and saving, further reducing output and income. Alternatively, lawmakers could choose to offset rising interest costs, at least in part, by reducing benefits and services. Those reductions could be made in many ways, but to the extent that they came from cutting federal investments, future output and income would also be reduced. As another option, lawmakers could respond to higher interest payments by allowing deficits to increase for some time, but that approach would require greater deficit reduction later if lawmakers wanted to avoid a long-term increase in debt relative to GDP.

REDUCED ABILITY TO RESPOND TO DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS

Having a relatively small amount of outstanding debt gives a government the ability to borrow funds to address significant unexpected events, such as recessions, financial crises, and wars. In contrast, having a large amount of debt leaves a government with less flexibility to address financial and economic crises, which in many countries have been very costly. A large amount of debt

could also harm a country's national security by constraining military spending in times of crisis or limiting the country's ability to prepare for such a crisis.

A few years ago, the size of the U.S. federal debt gave the government the flexibility to respond to the financial crisis and severe recession by increasing spending and cutting taxes to stimulate economic activity, providing public funding to stabilize the financial sector, and continuing to pay for other programs even as tax revenues dropped sharply because of the decline in output and income. If federal debt stayed at its current percentage of GDP or grew further, the government would find it more difficult to undertake similar policies in the future. As a result, future recessions and financial crises could have larger negative effects on the economy and on people's well-being. Moreover, the reduced financial flexibility and increased dependence on foreign investors that would accompany a rise in debt could weaken the United States' international leadership.

GREATER CHANCE OF A FISCAL CRISIS

A large and continually growing federal debt would have another significant negative consequence: It would increase the probability of a fiscal crisis for the United States. In such a crisis, investors become unwilling to finance all of a government's borrowing needs unless they are compensated with very high interest rates; as a result, the interest rates on government debt rise suddenly and sharply relative to rates of return on other assets. That increase in interest rates reduces the market value of outstanding government bonds, causing losses for investors who hold them. Such a decline can precipitate a broader financial crisis by creating losses for mutual funds, pension funds, insurance companies, banks, and other holders of government debt—losses that may be large enough to cause some financial institutions to fail.

Unfortunately, there is no way to predict with any confidence whether or when such a fiscal crisis might occur in the United States. In particular, there is no identifiable tipping point of debt relative to GDP that indicates that a crisis is likely or imminent. All else being equal, however, the larger a government's debt, the greater the risk of a fiscal crisis.

The likelihood of such a crisis also depends on the economic environment, both domestic and international. If investors expect continued economic growth, they are generally less concerned about debt burdens; conversely, high debt can reinforce more general concern about an economy. In many cases around the world, fiscal crises have begun during recessions and, in turn, have exacerbated them. In some instances, a crisis has been triggered by news that a government would, for any number of reasons, need to borrow an unexpectedly large amount of money. Then, as investors lost confidence and interest rates spiked, borrowing became more difficult and expensive for the government. That development forced policymakers to either cut spending and increase taxes immediately and substantially to reassure investors, or renege on the terms of the country's existing debt, or increase the supply of money and boost inflation. In some cases, a fiscal crisis also made borrowing more expensive for private-sector borrowers because uncertainty about the government's response to the crisis reduced confidence in the viability of private-sector enterprises. Higher private-sector interest rates, combined with reductions in government spending and increases in taxes, have tended to worsen economic conditions in the short term.

If a fiscal crisis occurred in the United States, policymakers would have only lim-

ited—and unattractive—options for responding to it. In particular, the government would need to undertake some combination of three approaches: restructuring its debt (that is, seeking to modify the contractual terms of its existing obligations), pursuing inflationary monetary policy, and adopting an austerity program of spending cuts and tax increases. Thus, such a crisis would confront policymakers with extremely difficult choices and probably have a very significant negative impact on the country.

Mr. CORNYN. I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, before the Chair is yielded, I wish to say it is almost like *deja vu* all over again. The great Senator from Maine was sitting in the chair only a few days ago when this Senator had a chance to make comments. Here we are again.

I wish to say to the Senator from Texas, as he is leaving the Chamber, that I think the Senator is a good Senator who believes strongly in what he is saying, but if there is a will, there is a way. Reasonable people can come together and work through to a reasonable conclusion.

I was going to say, with the Senator from Texas on the floor, the Senator had a chance to express his opinion. Indeed, the Senator did with his vote when we passed the appropriations bill, now called the continuing resolution, because we have not brought each of the appropriations bills to the floor.

We accepted it at the House number. The senior Senator from Texas expressed his opinion by means of his "no" vote, but "yes" votes won, and we sent it to the other body to keep the government open. Indeed, the government is not open.

I go back to 2 days ago when the Senator from Maine was the Presiding Officer and here we are again. If we would remember the Golden Rule put in the old English: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you or put into modern street language: Treat others as you want to be treated—in other words, recognize that the other fellow has a point of view and you have to respect his point of view—even though his point of view may be different from yours—the genius of American democracy is hammering out those differences and building consensus in a civil way and achieving a workable solution. What we have here is brinkmanship.

We hammered it out, we passed appropriations, a continuing resolution. We sent it to the House of Representatives, and they will not put it up for a vote because they are only—and this is operative—going to pass this with Republican votes.

What does that do? This takes an outsized minority of the Republican caucus being the tail that is wagging the Republican dog in the House of Representatives. If they only pass it with Republican votes instead of the will of the whole House then, in fact, we will have what we have now, a small out-of-the-mainstream political philosophy extremist group dictating what

they want and only what they want. It is their way or no way. That is not treating others as they wish to be treated. This is an attitude of saying: I know better than you and my way is going to be the only way. That is not how we govern this country. That is not how we honor and respect other people's points of view that may be different from ours.

I do not wish to hold up the Senator from Maine, but I wanted to follow up on the conversation I had through the Chair 2 days ago. All of these high-minded, highfalutin ideas of all of us getting together and treating each other as we wish to be treated and hammering out this policy—lo and behold, maybe everything I am saying doesn't have a thing to do with this by virtue of an investigative piece having been done by the New York Times over the weekend. I wish to read the first three paragraphs of this investigative piece. It is entitled: "A Federal Budget Crisis Months in the Planning" by Sheryl Gay Stolberg and Mike McIntire.

Shortly after President Obama started his second term, a loose-knit coalition of conservative activists led by former Attorney General Edwin Meese III gathered in the capital to plot strategy. Their push to repeal Mr. Obama's health care law was going nowhere, and they desperately needed a new plan.

Out of that session, held one morning in a location the members insist on keeping secret, came a little-noticed "blueprint to defunding Obamacare," signed by Mr. Meese and leaders of more than three dozen conservative groups.

It articulated a take-no-prisoners legislative strategy that has long percolated in conservative circles: that Republicans could derail the health care overhaul if conservative lawmakers were willing to push fellow Republicans—including their cautious leaders—into cutting off financing for the entire federal government.

This is only the first three paragraphs. If that is true, then all of these high-minded ideas of the Golden Rule and treating each other with respect and working out your differences is all out the window.

If that is true—and it looks as if it is by virtue of what we see going on down in the other end of this Capitol Building, a small group of people are not going to do anything to open the government unless they get their way to defund the Affordable Care Act, the health care reform act—I would suggest that if that is the case, then the people who are suffering should sit up and take notice of what is happening to their government.

We have heard examples over and over. Senator BROWN and I were just talking about the 97 percent of people who are laid off in NASA. Then what do we do with all of the civilian workforce in NASA? Think of what this is doing to all of the contractors who work for NASA.

We have heard also the statistic out here that over 70 percent of the intelligence community has been furloughed. We have heard that Head Start, the federally funded program to get children ready to start the public

schools, kindergarten and first grade, is shutting down.

We know last week, when we were in the middle of this shutdown, there was a storm brewing in the Gulf of Mexico. Thank the good Lord it fizzled out, but at one point it was expected to turn into a Category 1 hurricane hitting the gulf coast. Had that happened, FEMA had been laid off—although they reached back and started the National Guard, et cetera. Thank you to Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel for finding an unintended consequence in the law that was passed to pay the U.S. military while the government is shut down because he found a little hook in there.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 2 additional minutes.

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

Mr. NELSON. He found a hook in there so he could then extend that to most of the civilian workforce, including some of the National Guard, but we didn't know that.

In my State of Florida, 156 employees were getting the notices just in the National Guard on Friday. There were already 1,000 military technicians that had been furloughed in the National Guard, and we had an inbound storm.

What about the programs in our State to help veterans find jobs? If we are not done with this shutdown at the end of October, that is gone. What about the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, a part of the State government. Ten percent of their funds are Federal funds. What about the Florida Department of Agriculture? Over 6 percent of their workforce is federally funded.

What about—and we have heard this in the Senate—Women, Infants, and Children? A society is supposed to take care of its very old and its very young. This is why we have programs for Women, Infants, and Children. Yet the supplemental nutrition program for women, for nursing mothers, for children up to the age of 5, for breast-feeding support, for nutrition education, and for health checkups is gone.

I could go on and on. Others have said it more articulately than I. This is ridiculous. This shouldn't go on. As the drumbeat of the crescendo continues, it will grow louder as we march toward October 17, when the debt ceiling has to be raised so we don't go into default.

It is a sad day.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAINE). The assistant majority leader.

STIRLING AND ELLIS NOMINATIONS

Mr. DURBIN. I rise to speak in support of two individuals whose nominations will be voted on at 5 p.m. We haven't set any records in the Senate in the last 5 weeks for productivity. We passed one major piece of legislation, which the Senator from Oregon brought before us relative to the issue

of our helium reserve. It was great work. It is one of the few bipartisan actions we have accomplished in 5 weeks, maybe the only bipartisan one. At 5 p.m. we have a chance to improve our record.

These are two nominees for Federal district court judges in Illinois that I commend to the Members of the Senate.

I wish to say at the outset it isn't only this Senator on this side of the aisle making this recommendation, Senator MARK KIRK and I worked on a bipartisan basis to come up with these nominees and get them approved by our nomination committees. They are then approved by us, by the White House, by the Judiciary Committee, and brought to the floor.

Since Senator KIRK has been elected, we have done this in lockstep, together every step of the way. By tradition, the President's party Senator, in this case myself, has three appointments. Senator KIRK has the fourth, but each of us has the veto power over the other's choices.

We have a working relationship and a good one. Senator KIRK has endorsed these two nominees: Colin Bruce, who has been nominated to serve in the Central District of Illinois, and Sara Ellis, nominated to serve in the Northern District of Illinois. They have the experience, qualifications, and integrity to be excellent Federal judges. Both appeared before the Senate Judiciary Committee for a hearing on June 19, and both were reported out of the committee by a unanimous voice vote.

I would like briefly to discuss their backgrounds and qualifications.

Colin Bruce has been nominated to fill the judicial vacancy that opened in Urbana when Judge Michael McCuskey took senior status. Michael McCuskey is also one of my appointments, an outstanding Federal judge. I am sorry he is going into senior status, but he felt, and I did too, that Colin Bruce would be an excellent replacement to succeed him in that position.

Mr. Bruce has worked in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of Illinois since 1989. He currently serves as the first assistant U.S. attorney, a position he has held since 2010.

Colin Bruce applied for the position of U.S. attorney. He didn't get it. But the man who did, the man I selected, Jim Lewis, hired him as his first assistant. So it was a few months ago that Jim Lewis, the U.S. District Attorney, came by my office with Colin Bruce. We talked about a number of things, and he said: Incidentally, I don't know what I would do without Colin Bruce. He is such an extraordinary first assistant. When he finished his presentation, I said: Jim, would you stick around for a minute; Colin, go outside, if you would. I said: Jim, I have an opening for a judgeship, and I know Colin is a person who would fill that