

do, which is to work together. At the end of the day, this is not going to be a Republican plan or a Democratic plan or a Senate plan or a House plan. It is going to be a plan that allows us to govern.

With that, I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to extend the period of morning business for debate only until 7 p.m., and that all provisions of the previous order remain in effect.

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

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I wish to follow up on the remarks of my colleagues and the Senators who have spoken before me.

It seems as though we have accepted this new normal, that shutting down the operations of the largest enterprise in America is acceptable. I concur with my colleague, the Senator from Alaska, about the real stories and real pain that is taking place because of this government shutdown. I commend some of my colleagues for their comments. When we read these tragic stories, whether it concerns NIH or it concerns our veterans or concerns our National Park Service, they say: Oh, but that part of the government we want to reopen. Does that mean that every other aspect of government remains closed until we can find that story?

I point out stories to my colleagues that were in both *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* today—stories we should be celebrating about—three American Nobel Prize winners. Does that mean we should now reopen the NSF, because if the National Science Foundation isn't funded, there may not be a next generation of American Nobel Prize winners? Do we have to bring in a story about some child being hurt because their food or their meat or their fish wasn't inspected correctly?

I have to tell my colleagues, I spent a lot longer in business than I have in politics, and I have been involved in a lot of business negotiations. But I have never been involved in a negotiation that says during the negotiation we have to shut down the operations of our business and inflict pain not only upon our employees but upon the general economy across the board.

That is not the way to govern.

We have talked about stories about Federal workers. But I agree with the Senator from Alaska. It also hurts the hotel owners along the Skyline Drive in our State of Virginia and the government contractors who start and stop because they don't understand

how government is going to operate. I heard a story this morning about a small business outside a government facility in St. Louis that is hurting as well.

This piecemeal approach to reopening government makes no sense. What might be better—as we hear from some folks who want to have this piecemeal effect—is to ask: What parts of the government should stay closed. This is not the way to operate. We ought to reopen this government, put our people back to work, get this economy going again, and continue the very real conversations we have to have about getting our fiscal house in order.

What makes this different to me, in the 4½ years I have been in the Senate, than previous discussions and debates is that we have this—the first in my tenure in the Senate—government shutdown which disproportionately is hurting Virginia and Maryland. But it is literally hurting every community across America. But we have this tragedy, this catastrophe merging now into a deadline that is going to hit us next week where there are certain Members of Congress who say: It is OK if America defaults.

I find that stunning.

When we look back, we find there has never been a major industrial country in modern history that has defaulted. As a matter of fact, the last major country to default was Argentina, back in December of 2001. In the aftermath of that default, they had over 100 percent per annum inflation. Every family in Argentina saw literally 60 percent of their net worth disappear within a few weeks. America is not Argentina, but why would we even get close to that kind of potential economic catastrophe?

It has been mentioned already that America holds a record as the reserve currency for the world. When crises happen, as have happened around the world recently in many countries, people and capital flow into the dollar. That is because the dollar and the full faith and credit of the United States has never been suspect. There has never been a question of whether we are going to honor our commitments. Next week, or very shortly after, that history is going to be put potentially in jeopardy.

I have heard those who say we can prioritize payments. There is no business group in America or no economist that I know of, from left to right, who believes that somehow America can partially default and prioritize payments. Are we going to pay interest? Are we going to pay our troops?

Those of us who served at State levels realize that sometimes our budgets are close to 50 percent passthroughs from the Federal Government.

The Presiding Officer was the governor of the great State of West Virginia. How long before West Virginia defaults if America starts prioritizing its payments? How many other De-troits will there be all across America

if we were to take this type of irresponsible action? Even if there were some possibility that there might be some chance of some logic behind this partial payment scheme, it has never been tried before. No industrial country has ever gotten this close to a default. Why would we take the chance? Why would we play Russian roulette with only one bullet in two chambers? It is something that at this moment, for our national economy and the world economy, can be devastating.

I know we seem to all be repeating ourselves on both sides, but to me it seems very easy in a negotiation; we have differences. I would say to my colleagues I probably make folks on my side more angry than almost anyone else on these issues around getting our country's balance sheet in order. I am anxious to continue those discussions about tax reform, about entitlement reform, about bringing our debt-to-GDP ratio down. But that kind of negotiation hasn't happened while we have this government shutdown and the full faith and credit of the United States potentially in jeopardy.

So let's open the government, not just because we hear some tragic story about one component of the government, not just because we need to make the case about food inspectors, about the National Science Foundation, about NASA Langley where we do aeronautics research—3,500 people and 7 people were at work last week. China, India, other nations around the world are not stopping their research, not stopping their investments because we can't get our act together. Open this government. Take off the table the idea that America will default. Then I am anxious to join with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to get our country's balance sheet in order. But to continue to hold this economy and these stories of these Americans lives in this limbo is irresponsible beyond words.

So I hope we will go ahead and—agreeing with my colleagues who have spoken already, let's get this government open. Let's take and make sure we are going to honor and pay our debts, and let's get to the very real, important questions of how we get our Nation's balance sheet right.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.J. RES. 72

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I want to again thank the majority leader for bringing the attention of this body to the tragedy of those servicemen who lost their lives and the fact that, unfortunately, their families had been notified improperly, I believe, that they will not be paid the tax-free death gratuity they are entitled to under law. This is wrong. Every Member of this body agrees this is wrong. Every Republican agrees this is wrong, and I am confident every Democrat agrees it is wrong as well.

Indeed, the way this announcement that was made was highly troubling.

The Department of Defense notified our military families via Twitter that those servicemembers who die in battle will not be paid their tax-free death gratuities due to the partial Federal Government shutdown.

I think this is yet another pattern that we have seen distressingly from the Obama administration of politicizing this shutdown and playing partisan games to maximize the pain that is inflicted on Americans. It is part and parcel of the pattern we have seen, barricading the World War II memorial, barricading the parking lot at Mount Vernon, George Washington's home, even though Mount Vernon is privately operated, barricading the roads leaving Mount Rushmore, even though they are State roads and not Federal roads.

The actions by the Department of Defense are also contrary to the statute that this body just passed. The military death gratuity is by statute a pay and personnel benefit. Accordingly, it is clearly funded by Public Law 113-39, the Pay Our Military Act that was passed in a bipartisan manner this week. We already acted to prevent this and, unfortunately, the Defense Department is declining to follow that law that we passed.

The legislation this body already passed would immediately act to take the families of those soldiers and sailors and airmen and marines whose lives are tragically taken—to take them off the table and say: Regardless of what happens in a government shutdown, we are going to stand by the men and women fighting for America.

Indeed, the House of Representatives has introduced a bipartisan bill to immediately fund death gratuity payments. When that bill is passed, the Senate should pass that bill immediately. Indeed, the Pentagon should abandon this policy to begin with and simply follow the law that was already passed. But if they do not, I call upon all 100 Senators to come together, to listen to the majority leader, who spoke powerfully about the need to stand by our service men and women whose lives are tragically taken. When the House passes that bill, which I am confident it will do so with considerable speed, I would call upon every Senator to listen to the majority leader's call and to stand with our service men and women.

But there is something else we can do right here today to demonstrate that this body does not have to be locked in partisan gridlock, to demonstrate that bipartisan cooperation is possible, and to demonstrate that our veterans are truly not the subject of partisan dispute but are separate and deserve to be treated fairly, deserve to have the commitments, the promises we made to our veterans honored; that is, this body can stop blocking the legislation that the House of Representatives has already passed—bipartisan legislation to fund the VA, to fund disability payments—so we do not hold them hostage to what is happening in Washington.

Accordingly, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H.J. Res. 72, making continuing appropriations for veterans benefits for fiscal year 2014; that the measure be read three times and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DURBIN). Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the distinguished Senator from Texas has stated again what has already been talked about here a lot, and that is a piecemeal approach to funding our government.

As do most Americans, we Democrats support the purpose of this bill to fund the Veterans' Administration. But there is no reason for us to have to choose between this important government function and disease control, NIH, highway safety, FBI, poor children, workplace safety, or protecting the environment.

We could do all these things if the House Republican leadership would just allow the House to vote on the Senate-passed measure to end the shutdown. Everyone knows the votes are there.

Our position is simple: Open the government, pay our bills, and then we will be happy to negotiate about anything.

We need to end this government shutdown.

First of all, my friend talks about these five families who are in bereavement, and that is an understatement. Five sons, husbands, friends were killed over the weekend.

Providing the funding that my friend requests would not enable DOD to pay a death gratuity to the families of 17 servicemembers—five over the weekend. We have had others die who have given their lives to protect the Nation since the shutdown began on October 1. Seventeen.

This is but one example of how the efforts of the Senator from Texas to fund the government on a piecemeal basis does not work.

If the Speaker would allow the House to pass the Senate continuing resolution, the Department of Defense would have the authority it needs to bring families to Dover, DE, to receive the remains of their family members and to pay the death gratuity benefits.

The junior Senator from Texas expresses concern for America's veterans. But his consent request addresses only some of the ways in which the American people, through their government, have committed to help our veterans.

Let me quote from the remarks of the Senator from Connecticut, Mr. MURPHY. He gave these remarks on October 3. Here is exactly what he said:

I would note also that I believe the resolution the Senator is offering and suggested be

passed provides only partial funding for the VA. There is no funding here to operate the national cemeteries. There is no funding for the Board of Veterans' Appeals. There is no funding for constructing VA hospitals and their clinics. There is no funding, actually, to operate the IT system that the entire VA needs in order to continue going forward.

So there could not be a better example of: Why we are involved in this? Why could not we just open the government? Let our former colleague, the former Senator from Georgia, Max Cleland, a decorated, disabled American veteran who runs the cemeteries, do his job. He cannot do that. Let's get it all over with. Let's have the NIH go forward, the Centers for Disease Control, the Park Service. We cannot have this piecemeal approach, because you wind up with the same situation in which we now find ourselves. We want to do something for the veterans, but it does not take care of much of what the veterans need.

So I ask unanimous consent that my friend's request be modified as follows: That an amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to; that the joint resolution, as amended, then be read a third time and passed; and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate. This amendment is the text that passed the Senate and is a clean continuing resolution for the entire government—everything; veterans, there are cemeteries, there are benefits, everything—and it is something that is already over in the House and reportedly has the support of a majority of the Members of the House of Representatives.

So I would ask my friend to really surprise the world, surprise the country, and say: I agree. Modify it. Let's fund the government.

And then, as we have said, as I have said—and everyone listen: We are happy, when the government is open, when we can pay our bills, to sit down and talk about anything they want to talk about. It does not matter. No restrictions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MANCHIN). Does the Senator so modify his request?

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I ask unanimous consent that the majority leader and I be able to engage in a colloquy so that we may perhaps be able to, as the majority leader said, surprise the world by finding some avenues of bipartisan cooperation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am happy to sit down and talk to the Senator—his office or my office. The point we have right here today is that we need the government open. With all due respect to my friend, the junior Senator from Texas—I want to say this in a most respectful way—he and I, with the dialog here on the Senate floor, we are not going to work this out. I have asked that the government be open so

that everyone can have benefits. The veterans measure he proposes leaves many veterans out in the cold—out in the cold—including the families of 17 of our servicemen who were killed since this came into effect, this shutdown.

So we will go as we have. I object to his proposal. I assume he will object to mine. And then we will go through the 10 minutes per person and see what happens later today. But I do—I am happy to sit down and talk to the Senator in my office, his office, any place he suggests, privately or publicly.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, was there—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator so modify his request?

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, just a clarification: Was there objection to the request that we be able to engage in a colloquy? I was not clear as to what the majority leader was objecting to.

Mr. REID. Yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Is there objection to the modified request?

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I will note with regret that the majority leader objected to engaging in a discussion, to engaging in negotiations here on the Senate floor. I think that is unfortunate.

So I will promulgate the questions I would have asked him directly, and he may choose whether he may wish to answer.

The majority leader read from comments that Senator MURPHY made on the Senate floor, suggesting that the House bill funding the VA was not broad enough. I would note, in my office we have drafted legislation that would fund the VA in its entirety. And if his objection is that it is not broad enough, I will readily offer that I would happily work with the majority leader to fund every bit of the VA as it is right now today, and we could introduce that bill. Indeed, I would be happy to have it labeled the Reid-Cruz bill and to give lead authorship to the majority leader.

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

Mr. CRUZ. I would be happy to yield for a question.

Mr. DURBIN. Would the Senator be willing to take care of the 560,000 veterans who are Federal employees, many of whom have now been furloughed?

Mr. CRUZ. I thank my friend from Illinois for that question. Indeed, I enthusiastically support the proposal that the House unanimously passed to give backpay to Federal workers. Indeed, I would ask a question of the assistant majority leader: whether the Senate will even vote on that proposal because there are eight bills funding the Federal Government that are sitting on the majority leader's desk. We have not been allowed to vote on any of them.

Mr. DURBIN. If the Senator from Texas is asking me a question, I would respond through the Chair that we

have given the Senator from Texas ample opportunity to completely fund the government, including all of the veterans who work for the Federal Government, and all of the functions of the Federal Government so we do not run into the embarrassment of these poor families in their bereavement being denied the most basic benefits that our government gives.

He has had a chance to do that over and over. I believe he has declined that opportunity. So he bears some responsibility for the unfortunate circumstances we face.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I would note the fact that there are some issues on which we have partisan disagreements does not mean there are not other issues on which we can come together.

Ms. STABENOW. Would the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. CRUZ. I am happy to yield to my friend for a question.

Ms. STABENOW. Through the Chair to the Senator from Texas, I am wondering if his motion includes the full funding of the VA medical system, which is a completely government-run, government-controlled health care system?

Mr. CRUZ. I thank my friend for that question. As I said, I would readily support legislation fully funding the VA, because the VA is a vital government system. It is a promise we have made. It is unrelated to ObamaCare. My principal complaint this past week has been that the Democratic majority in this body is holding programs unrelated to ObamaCare hostage in order to force ObamaCare on everyone. We agreed for active-duty military.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, if I might, just to clarify so that I understand, because the Senator from Texas has, in fact, made the ending of a private sector competitive health care system for up to 30 million Americans part of what he wants to stop, I wanted to be clear that the fully government-funded, government-run, with government doctors system through the Veterans' Administration is something the Senator is advocating that we continue to fund through the Federal Government?

Mr. CRUZ. I thank my friend from Michigan for that question. Yet again, the answer is yes. I believe we should fully fund the VA. The two questions I would promulgate—

Mr. REID. Regular order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the modified request?

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, reserving the right to object—

Mr. REID. Regular order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the modified request?

Mr. CRUZ. I would note the majority leader seems not to want to engage in debate. So I object. I hope the majority leader will start negotiating.

Mr. REID. Regular order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard to the modified request.

Is there objection to the original request?

Mr. REID. Yes, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, using leader time, we have a number of people who are wishing to speak. They should be able to do that. But I say as nicely as I can, the problem we have here is what people are saying, like my friend from Texas, little bits and pieces of government. It will not work. We have to open the government. So until that happens—we have to open the government. We have to make sure we can pay our debts. Then we will negotiate.

I know he is fixed on ObamaCare. We know that. But the problem is that is not going to change. So I would hope we can do what needs to be done, open the government, make sure we pay our bills, and then we negotiate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. I want to join with most of my colleagues who have talked about the urgency of us getting the government open. It is causing great harm to our country. Make no mistake about it, it is hurting our economy. I could talk about my own State of Maryland. Our Governor has estimated that we are losing \$15 million every day. So every day is precious.

I could talk about over 100,000 Federal workers in Maryland who are furloughed out of the 800,000 nationally, having a huge impact on our economy.

This morning Senator BOXER held a news briefing where we talked about the impact on the Environmental Protection Agency where 93 percent of its employees have been furloughed. We can talk about the direct impact of those employees not being there.

There was a representative from the Ding Darling Refuge in Florida saying not only did it hurt the local economy directly, but she talked about one of the contract services that provided the touring service to the refuge had to lay off 20-some employees.

There are private sector jobs that are directly being lost as a result of this furlough. It is going to be very difficult to get back that loss in our economy the longer the government shutdown lasts. It is wasteful to the taxpayer. The last shutdown cost the taxpayers \$2 billion. Here we talk about conservatives who want to do something about the national debt and they are wasting taxpayer dollars by keeping government closed.

Yes, it is hurting our Federal workforce. I joined with Senator MIKULSKI in the comments she made a little bit earlier. Our Federal workforce has had to endure freezes in salaries, furloughs as a result of sequestration, freezes in the number of employees who can be hired, doing more work with less, and now furloughs again under a government shutdown. Those who are working do not know when they are going to get paid. It is not what we should be

doing to our Federal workforce. They have suffered. This is wrong. It is totally avoidable.

The furloughs at the Environmental Protection Agency are jeopardizing our public health. We had experts come in today and talk about the fact that we do not have the people on guard to protect our waters, to protect our air, to protect our environment. It is jeopardizing public health. It is jeopardizing our environment.

I mentioned this morning, and let me mention again, the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge located on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, in Cambridge. This is a community in which that refuge is a huge part of their economy. This is a popular month for visitors to visit Blackwater. Well, the local businesses are hurting. The restaurants have less customers; the hotels, less rooms are being rented. It goes on and on and on, the damage to our economy.

Harbor Point is one of the most important economic developments in downtown Baltimore. It is an RCRA site, which means it is under court order requiring the Environmental Protection Agency to sign off on the development plan. Well, we have a development plan. The city council is acting. We are ready to move forward. But guess what. We cannot get EPA to sign off on it because the people responsible are now on furlough. That is holding up economic growth and economic development in Baltimore. That is what this is doing. It is harming us.

Maryland farmers on the Chesapeake Bay are doing what is right to try to help our bay. They depend upon the protections of the programs that are out there on soil conservation. The Senator from Michigan knows through how hard she has been working on the agriculture bill to provide the tools that are necessary to help our farmers be responsible farmers on land conservation.

I received a call from a farmer near Centerville, MD, on Monday that sums up pretty well how important the Natural Resources Conservation Service is to their work. This person is enrolled in the Conservation Stewardship Program, the CSP. That means he is planting bumper crops in an effort to help us deal with the runoff issues of pesticides and insecticides into the bay, helping us in helping the bay.

He receives certain payments as a result of participation in the program. He is no longer getting those payments. We are asking him to make sacrifices, but we are not giving him the Federal partnership. That is not right. He is hurt. He said: What am I supposed to do? Am I supposed to continue to do this? He told me he has a son with a medical condition that requires regular clinical eye treatment. He does not know whether he can afford that this month. He was helping us with the environment. Now what do we do? We back off of what is necessary.

I could give you many more examples. There is no piecemeal way you can correct each one of those.

On our foreign policy issues, I have the honor of chairing the East Asia and Pacific Subcommittee of the Foreign Relations Committee. President Obama was supposed to be the headliner at the East Asia Economic Summit this past week. Guess who stole the headline. President Xi of China rather than our President. Asia is wondering whether America is open for business. We were missing at the table. That is no way for America to be conducting its business. We need to be open. We need to get government open.

I hear my colleagues who want to negotiate budget deals. I am all for that. I think I have a reputation around here and people know I am interested in getting Democrats and Republicans together and getting a budget that makes sense for our country. But let me quote from the Baltimore Sun from this morning, because I think they say it better than I could say it. This is an exact quote from the Baltimore Sun about negotiations and how we have to go through negotiations.

Passing a “clean” continuing resolution keeping government fully operating at funding levels that GOP has already endorsed is no compromise. It’s status quo. Raising the debt ceiling isn’t a concession either—it allows the nation to pay the bills Congress has already incurred and prevents the possibility of a government default, which would hurt the economy, raise borrowing costs and increase the Federal deficit.

So when Speaker Boehner lashes out at President Obama for failing to negotiate, one has to ask, what is this thing he describes as negotiation? House Republicans are not merely leveraging their political position—as some dryly claim—they are threatening to do grievous harm to the global economy and the American public.

The gun isn’t raised to Mr. Obama’s head or to the Senate’s. The Democrats have no particular stake in passing a continuing resolution or in raising the debt ceiling other than keeping public order and doing what any reasonable person expects Congress to do. No, the gun is raised at the nation as a whole. That’s why descriptions like “ransom” and “hostage” are not mere hyperbole, they are as close as the English language gets to accurately describing the GOP strategy.

The editorial ends by saying:

It’s time for Mr. Boehner to put down the gun and put more faith in the democratic process.

We need to negotiate a budget for next year. We absolutely need to do it. We tried to go to budget conference many times. The majority leader has repeated that request today. The formula of what is right for this country to do—and it is not one side getting advantage over another—the right thing to do is open government, pay our bills, and, yes, let’s negotiate a budget that will not be what the Democrats want, will not be what the Republicans want. We are going to have to compromise as the Framers of our Constitution envisioned that we would do. That is what we should have done months ago. We passed our budget in March. We should have been negotiating months ago.

But what we need to do right now is open government, pay our bills, and, yes, then it is ripe for us to sit down and negotiate. I can tell you, we are ready to do that. But it is up to Speaker BOEHNER now to vote, to vote on the resolution that will keep government open, to vote on a way we can make sure that we will continue to pay our bills, and then accept our offer to sit down and negotiate a budget for the coming year. That would be the best thing we can do for the American people.

I urge my colleagues with a sense of urgency that we move this immediately because of the damage we are causing to our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, there can be no doubt that no one wants to be here. Not one Member of this body wants to be in shutdown. We all may have different reasons, different explanations as to why we are here. We might differ with regard to our own beliefs as to how best we should get out of this. But not one of us wants to be here. Every one of us recognizes how awful it is to be in a shutdown posture.

I would like to take a few moments and explain my thoughts on both of those two points. I believe perhaps the single most important reason, single most undisputable reason why we are in a shutdown posture has to do with the fact that for a variety of reasons we have been operating on the basis of continuing resolutions for several years in a row. A continuing resolution, of course, is a bill, a legislative vehicle through which Congress may choose to keep government programs funded at current levels. It is kind of a reset button. It propels us forward on the basis of our current spending pattern, rather than on the basis of an independently, freshly negotiated set of priorities.

This is a different way of running government. Normally this is reserved for unusual circumstances. It usually does not last as long as we have been going this time around, for about 4½ years this way. But this causes us to do things in a way that is different than one would otherwise choose to do them. It is certainly very different than the manner in which we would operate in any other aspect of our lives.

To use one familiar example, let’s analogize Congress’s spending pattern, its spending decisions, to a consumer going to the grocery store. Suppose you went to the grocery store having been informed by your spouse that you need to bring home bread, milk, and eggs. So you went to that grocery store, you put bread and milk and eggs in your basket. You go to the checkout counter. You place the bread, the milk, and the eggs on the counter. The cashier rings you up. The cashier at that point says: Okay, here is what you will owe us for these items, but we will not allow you to buy just bread, milk, and

eggs. In order to buy these items at this store, we will also require you to purchase a half ton of iron ore, a bucket of nails, a book about cowboy poetry, and a Barry Manilow album.

Of course, anyone being told that would be a little surprised. Anyone being told that would be reluctant to shop at that same store in the future. And if another store existed, another alternative, very few, if any, consumers would continue shopping at that institution.

Yet that in some ways is the way we are asked to spend money here in Congress when we are operating on the basis of back-to-back continuing resolutions, just pushing reset on our spending button, keeping a Federal Government that spends about \$3.7 trillion a year operating sort of on economic autopilot.

It would actually be a little bit closer analogy if we changed the hypothetical to a circumstance in which the cashier said not just that you have to buy half a ton of iron ore, a bucket of nails, a book about cowboy poetry, and a Barry Manilow album, but you also have to buy one of every single item in the entire grocery store in order to buy anything—no bread, no milk, no eggs, nothing unless you buy one of everything in the entire store. That would bring us a little closer to the analogy we are dealing with here where we have to choose to fund everything or alternatively to fund nothing. Neither one of those, it seems to me, is a terribly good solution. Neither one of those fairly represents good decisionmaking practices.

We ought to be able to proceed, as past Congresses have historically, passing a dozen or so—sometimes more—appropriations bills and going through our Federal Government category by category debating and discussing each appropriations measure, discussing the contents of that measure to make sure there is sufficient agreement within this body and within the House of Representatives to continue funding the government function in question.

We have a new item in the store, so to speak, as we are shopping this year. This new item in the store is called ObamaCare, one that is about to take full effect on January 1, 2014. Yes, it is the law of the land, but we do have the final choice, the final option, the final authority to choose whether to fund that moving forward or, alternatively, to defund it. We can take that out of the grocery cart.

It is a new item that has caused a lot of people a lot of concern. A lot of people are fearing and experiencing job losses, cuts to their wages, having their hours slashed and losing their health care benefits as a result of this law, and they see more of these disturbing trends coming in the near future. So they are asking for Congress to help. They are asking for Congress to defund the implementation of this law.

A lot of people and many of my colleagues in this body have responded by

saying: Yes, but it is the law. That is true. It was passed by Congress 3½ years ago and signed into law by President Obama. It is important to remember two facts about this, however.

First of all, the President himself has announced that he is not following the law. He himself says the law is not ready to implement as it is written. He himself has refused to follow it as it is written.

Secondly, it is not unusual, it is not unheard of by any means to have a law that puts in place one standard, one program, and then have a subsequent appropriations decision made by Congress that results in the defunding of that very program. Let me cite one of many examples I could point to. Under Federal law, currently there is designated something known as the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository. That is our official nuclear waste repository. Yet for many years it has been defunded by the Congress. That is Congress's prerogative. Congress holds the power of the purse. Congress may decide to do that.

It is also important to remember that this was by design that it would work this way. Our Founding Fathers understood and set up the system so that it would work this way, and they put the power of the purse in the hands of the House of Representatives, understanding the House of Representatives would act first when exercising the power of the purse.

James Madison acknowledged this fact in Federalist No. 58, and if I can quote from that in pertinent part, James Madison wrote:

The House of Representatives can not only refuse, but they alone can propose the supplies requisite for the support of Government. They, in a word, hold the purse; that powerful instrument by which we behold, in the history of the British Constitution, an infant and humble representation of the People gradually enlarging the sphere of its activity and importance, and finally reducing, as far as it seems to have wished, all the overgrown prerogatives of the other branches of the Government. This power over the purse may, in fact, be regarded as the most complete and effectual weapon with which any Constitution can arm the immediate Representatives of the People, for obtaining a redress of every grievance, and for carrying into effect every just and salutary measure.

So we find ourselves now in a position in which the House of Representatives is wanting to get the government funded again and is acting to keep the government funded on a step-by-step basis, starting with those areas as to which there is the most broad-based bipartisan support, those areas of government that have nothing to do with the implementation and enforcement of ObamaCare. Moving step by step in this fashion, we can get the government funded again. We should be getting the government funded again.

In many respects, what we have seen over the last week—the conduct of the Obama administration during the first week of this shutdown—may well serve as the single best argument against

ObamaCare. What we have seen is a willingness of this President and his administration to utilize the already vast resources of the Federal Government to make it hurt—to hurt families, to hurt businesses, to hurt those who depend on their access to Federal lands, to national monuments, national parks, and other Federal installations. This itself is evidence of the fact that when we give government too much power, that power may, and ultimately will, be abused.

I want to be clear that this is not a problem that is distinctively Democratic. It is not something that belongs uniquely to liberals. This is equally a Republican problem. Republican and Democratic administrations in the past and in the future will have chosen at times to abuse power when it suits their interests in order to get their way politically. We need to not give yet another source of power to the Federal Government—a source of power that intrudes into one of the most personal aspects of human existence.

When we give the Federal Government control of our health care system, we give them control of aspects of our lives that are intensely personal, very intimate, and, frankly, not the business of the Federal Government. We don't want to give that power to a government that may one day be used against us for someone's partisan political gain. It is for that reason we are having this discussion. It is for that reason we need to keep the government funded.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, we are now in day 8 of the government shutdown, and the pain has been felt by all across the country—by the cancer patients being denied access to new clinical trials at NIH, by the mom whose son has muscular dystrophy. His name is Jackson. She told me that every day those researchers aren't working on a cure for her son's disease is a day lost. She said every day counts. Small businesses can't get affordable loans through the SBA. Farmers write me about not being able to get their conservation loans.

I have here a letter I read on the floor on Saturday:

Please do whatever you can to stop the government shutdown. We have 14 acres of land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program. Our rental payment is made to us this first week of October. We depend on this money. It is not a small amount for our family.

Kathy, from Minnesota:

I am an employee of the Social Security Administration, Office of Disability . . . I have seen you intervene on matters for claimants who have disability hearings pending. I am furloughed as part of the government shutdown. If you want your constituents' hearings addressed, I need to be at work in my office.

Alicia, from Hastings, MN:

I am writing to express my extreme concern over the federal government shutdown.

I am a teacher, a mother of three boys, and the wife of a furloughed veteran who works for the Minnesota Air National Guard. I have never before written a letter to my representatives, but feel so utterly helpless and frustrated at this time; I needed to voice my concern. . . . At this point in time, my husband, who is a veteran . . . is out of work because he is a federal employee not deemed essential. I am afraid that not only are the other 800,000 laid-off federal employees deemed non-essential, but the rest of the American citizens are non-essential as well.

She goes on to say:

Our struggles are real-life struggles; not a game, not philosophical, not in theory, not distant, and not imaginary. My hope is that these struggles and hardships matter to you . . . That is your duty. That is your charge. That is your enormous task. Shutting down the government is not one of those responsible actions.

That is what we are hearing from the people in my State, the people all over the country.

It is time to end the shutdown, and I will continue to urge my colleagues in the House to do the right thing and pass the straightforward bill the Senate passed on September 27 that would get the government back to work and get those employees back to their jobs.

It is great that the House passed a bill to pay them. That is a good thing. But now they are paying them to stay home. They are paying them to not do their job. They want to come back to work.

As you know, Madam President, we are now facing another critical deadline—the deadline for paying our bills or facing default. Next Thursday, on October 17, our country will hit its legal borrowing limit, and when that happens we will be asked to do what Congress has routinely done 70 times over the past 50 years; that is, pay our country's bills.

Let me be clear. This is about making good on commitments we have already made. This is about doing what regular Americans do every month when they pay their credit card bills. Yet lately we have heard voices from the other side from a number of people who seem to think this is just no big deal.

Just the other day Republican Congressman JOE BARTON of Texas said:

Some bills have to be paid and some bills we can defer and only pay partially, but that doesn't mean that we have to pay every bill the day it comes in.

Then there was Dan Mitchell, a senior fellow at the conservative Cato Institute, who said:

There's no need to fret.

No need to fret? That is not what history teaches us.

As chair on the Senate side of the Joint Economic Committee, I had a hearing a few weeks ago about the cost of this brinkmanship, about what happens if we go over that cliff, if we let our bills go, if we don't pay them.

Let's turn back to 2011. We have a very clear lesson of what happens when the mere prospect of a default sent shock waves through our economy. I

recently released a report examining the fallout of that brinkmanship. The results were ugly. The Dow Jones plummeted more than 2,000 points, our credit rating was downgraded, and \$2.4 trillion in American household wealth was wiped away.

I think it is important for everyone to remember that in 2011 all of this happened before we averted default. The Treasury Secretary sent a letter to Congress about the looming debt ceiling starting on January 6, 2011. On May 2 he announced that the debt limit would be reached on August 2. That was the magic day. We now have people saying maybe it is not October 17. They were saying that back then. But do you know what happened in the lead-up to August 2? On July 14 Standard & Poor's warned that it may downgrade the U.S. credit rating. They followed through on that. They downgraded it after the magic day of August 2, but it was 2 weeks before that they warned they might do it. What happened then? Well, over late July and early August, leading up to the date, the Dow Jones dropped more than 2,000 points.

So the next time someone says there is no need to fret over playing games with the debt ceiling, tell them to talk to the families whose retirement plans took a hit.

Make no mistake. This brinkmanship has very real consequences for our economy. We can't afford to go down this path again because this time around the fall could be so much harder. Our Joint Economic Committee analysis indicates that rates could rise on everything from credit cards and home mortgages to borrowing costs for businesses. At a time when our economy is finally turning a corner, this would put a real strain on families and small business owners.

But don't take my word for it. Secretary Lew has said extraordinary measures will be exhausted by mid-October. Already our government is not matching the retirement fund that Federal workers put in. Already they are not issuing some of the municipal bonds. Already they are not making some of the typical investments they would normally make. The business community and my friends on the other side of the aisle know businesses are overwhelmingly opposed to the idea of America not paying its bills, including key leaders such as Randall Stephenson, CEO of AT&T, who said:

It is unthinkable that the US could default, and it would be the height of irresponsibility for a public official to consider such a course.

Our country cannot afford to keep lurching from crisis to crisis. It is time for both parties to focus on real solutions and get the government back to work in the short term so we can focus on responsibly reducing our deficit in the long term. I supported the work of the Gang of 6, the work of the Gang of 8, the work that was being done by the Domenici-Rivlin Commission, the work that was being done by the debt com-

mission. I was one of 14 Senators who pushed for that work to be done, and I think it is a great basis. I don't agree with everything in it, but it is a good start for how we can negotiate a major deal. We cannot do that in the next few days. We need time to do it, and that is why the Senate proposal is 6 weeks—6 weeks to allow the government to open again so we can truly negotiate the kind of long-term debt reduction deal that we should.

We need to be forward-looking. We need to be forward-looking enough to recognize the decisions we make today go far beyond the next election cycle; they will be felt by generations to come. We have a responsibility to get things right. We can't allow our country to go over the brink. It is not the American way.

In a 1987 address to the American people when he was talking about the debt ceiling and the need to pay our country's bills, President Ronald Reagan said:

The United States has a special responsibility to itself and the world to meet its obligations. It means we have a well-earned reputation for reliability and credibility—two things that set us apart from much of the world.

I urge my colleagues to take these words seriously and to join me in ensuring that Congress acts responsibly and in the best interest of this country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. AYOTTE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that 10 minutes be divided between myself and the senior Senator from Texas, Mr. CORNYN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, not to object, I wish to clarify and ask if we might expand that to indicate the order which I believe we agreed to on the floor; that I be allowed to speak after my two distinguished colleagues, then Senator WHITEHOUSE, and then Senator COBURN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator modify her request?

Ms. AYOTTE. Absolutely, I modify the request to reflect what the senior Senator from Michigan said.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. AYOTTE. Madam President, I think it is time for us to end this government shutdown. I said on the floor twice last week, and prior to that, that I didn't think the strategy of defunding ObamaCare was a strategy which would be successful. While I support repealing and replacing ObamaCare, because I have seen the negative impact in my own State of New Hampshire, we have already seen the government is shut down and yet the ObamaCare exchanges have opened—showing already many of the problems with those exchanges, with the computer system, what are called glitches but are major flaws at this point. So it is time for

both sides to come together and resolve this on behalf of the American people.

Let me say it is appalling that we have soldiers who have been killed in the line of duty and their families aren't receiving death benefits. It is wrong. It is outrageous. We need to solve this right away and we need to solve this overall government shut-down.

In New Hampshire, we have private campgrounds which contract with the White Mountain National Forest which are closed, despite the fact that they actually bring revenue into the Treasury. They are run privately and actually make money for the Federal Government. I think the administration is playing games with things like that, and they should open those campgrounds. But ultimately we have to get this government open.

I wish to praise my colleague, the senior Senator from Maine Senator COLLINS, who came to the floor earlier today with an idea she has drawn not only from Members in this Chamber but in the House of Representatives of a way we could resolve this impasse, and that is taking something we have already voted on in this Chamber on the budget resolution. There was a vote in this Chamber on the medical device tax repeal, and that vote got on the budget resolution 79 to 20. We voted on a bipartisan basis to repeal this tax. I have been against this tax since I campaigned, because in New Hampshire we see the impact on our companies. It is going to increase health care costs. Many companies in New Hampshire, such as Smiths Medical and Corflex, are negatively impacted by this tax. Their workers are put in a difficult place when these companies can't expand or they have to reduce their workforce because of this onerous tax—which, by the way, is a 2.3-percent tax on revenue, a tax on innovation and new ideas in health care, rather than a tax on profit. But ultimately we should repeal this tax. It is wrong.

I wish to support what my colleague from Maine came to the floor on today as something we should take up and discuss in this Chamber; that is, a repeal of the medical device tax with a pay-for, a CR proposed for a longer period of time within the Budget Control Act numbers. She has proposed 6 months, and flexibility for the agencies to address the sequester in a way that is best and most sensible for the American people.

I thank my colleague from Maine. We can come together and resolve this. I hope that along with Members on the other side of the aisle who voted for the repeal, we can work together with Members of the House of Representatives, we can work this out, get the government open, and also address concerns that we have with ObamaCare which is impacting an important industry, the medical device industry that provides innovation and important life-saving devices for people in this country.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, four times the House of Representatives has sent over continuing resolutions with various additions for consideration by the Senate. Each time Senator REID and the majority party have tabled those provisions, essentially shutting them down without giving them an opportunity for a vote on the merits.

The last time, though, I believe Senator REID led his colleagues down a very treacherous path, because the provisions of this otherwise clean CR would have repealed the provision that carves out Congress and members of our staff and gives us preferential treatment under ObamaCare. The second part of it has to do with delaying penalties on individuals, just as the President has unilaterally done in delaying penalties on employers.

There is no good reason for us not to pass both of those provisions. But instead of trying to deal constructively with the House of Representatives—which has sent four separate bills over here on the continuing resolution—the majority leader has chosen to stiff-arm each of those efforts.

So when the majority leader comes to the floor and bemoans the government shutdown—something we all agree we should try our best to avoid—he claims they are willing to negotiate and the President is willing to negotiate a change in the outcome. But we know that is not true. We know each time they have shut out Republican proposals from the House of Representatives which would open the Federal Government with reasonable bipartisan agreements.

But what really is beyond belief is when I hear our colleagues come to the floor and they say, Why can't we have cancer research for children at NIH continue? Yet we come to the floor and offer bills which would open funding at the National Institutes of Health, that very same cancer research, and they are objected to by the Democratic side of the aisle. I don't know any other word to describe it than hypocrisy.

This morning, the Washington Post talks about the case of Michelle Langbehn from California, who was diagnosed with sarcoma and is unable to have an opportunity to participate in a clinical trial at NIH. This is the very same sort of program which would have been funded by the bill we offered on this side of the aisle and was objected to by the majority leader and the Democratic side.

There is one bright spot of agreement, and that is we were able to agree unanimously to pass the House bill that funded our troops which passed the House 423 to 0. That is the good news. But the bad news is this has now all morphed into a debate not only on the continuing resolution but on the debt ceiling. What the majority leader and his side of the aisle are apparently proposing is that without making any arrangements whatsoever to pay for

the \$17 trillion in debt that has already been accumulated, they want another clean debt ceiling increase, and the President says he won't negotiate, but in all likelihood we will be voting later this week on another \$1 trillion added to our maxed-out credit card without doing anything whatsoever to take care of the debt which has already been incurred.

That is fundamentally irresponsible. That is not me saying it. The American people have said this. The Congressional Budget Office has said this. The President's own bipartisan fiscal commission has said that.

In a recent poll from NBC-Wall Street Journal, when people were given the choice between raising the debt ceiling or not raising the debt ceiling, 44 percent said don't raise the debt ceiling, 22 percent said raise the debt ceiling. I realize we have more choices than that. There could be, coupled together with the raising of the debt ceiling, some real reforms of our broken entitlement programs to shore up Social Security and Medicare. But our colleagues and the President himself have said, No, I am not going to negotiate. No, I want a clean debt ceiling. No, I want the freedom to max out the credit card another \$1 trillion, without doing anything to pay off the debt that threatens not only our future prosperity, but our national security.

I remember very clearly when ADM Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was asked what the greatest national security threat to the United States was, and he said the national debt.

Why would our colleagues and the President of the United States ignore what the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff called the most significant national security threat to our country by saying, We are not interested in any reforms, we are not interested in anything that would actually pay down the debt and remove that threat to our national security and our future prosperity? Why would they say, No, we want to keep on spending money—money we don't actually have—and continue to borrow from our creditors like China and other foreign countries that hold a majority of our national debt? And when interest rates start to tick back up again as the Federal Reserve begins to taper its purchase of our own debt, we are going to see more and more of our national expenditures go to pay interest on that debt, crowding out not only national security but the safety net programs for the most vulnerable people in our country.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, first I apologize for the hoarse voice. I have been recovering from a cold. But it is important for me to have the opportunity to speak on behalf of the people from Michigan about what is happening, as everyone at home is scratching their head trying to figure

out why, in the greatest country in the world, we have seen government services now shut down and why there are those who think it is all right for us not to pay our bills and default on the full faith and credit of the United States of America, and why folks aren't willing to just open the government, pay our bills, and then negotiate.

In fact, we have been negotiating. We have negotiated on a lot. I am proud to say we negotiated a successful bipartisan farm bill not that long ago, a real deficit reduction proposal which actually passed the Senate with over a two-thirds vote. So we certainly are willing to negotiate.

Our leader Senator REID was willing to negotiate and in fact did negotiate with the Speaker of the House. As we all know, the Speaker called him in September and indicated he would like to see a 6-week extension of the current funding levels for the government while we were negotiating something more broadly on a budget. It was at a funding level which we don't believe is the right one in terms of investing in education, innovation, and creating jobs, but it was 6 weeks. After talking with us, our leader said that in the interest of negotiating and compromising, we would be willing to do that.

As we know now from Republican colleagues in the House who said that was the intent, unfortunately the Speaker could not follow through on the agreement he had negotiated.

That is because a minority of the minority in the House that is extremely intent on—and in fact has successfully achieved one of the goals they ran on—shutting down the government. But we have negotiated.

We also have negotiated on the big picture. We know that a few years ago with the Bowles-Simpson Commission, with others, that \$4 trillion in deficit reduction over 10 years was picked as an important goal to be able to rightsize and bring down our long-term debt. The good news is that not only have we cut the annual deficit in half, but of that \$4 trillion we have already agreed to \$2.5 trillion of that in deficit reduction over the next 10 years. So over half of that has already been achieved.

When my friends on the other side of the aisle act as if nothing is happening, I have to say the deficit has been cut in half and, second, over half of a long-term goal on the debt has been achieved. We need to keep going. We don't need to shut down the government to do that. We do not need to default on our debts as the greatest country in the world to do that. We just need to work together to do that. That is why we would say we need to open the government, pay our bills, and continue to negotiate. Let's negotiate, but it is a continuation of negotiating.

In fact, weakening the full faith and credit of the United States of America—think of that, the greatest country in the world, the full faith and

credit of the United States of America, that has been the highest standard in the world, when you say the full faith and credit of the United States of America—right now there are folks playing Russian roulette with that who are willing to weaken that and undermine our recovery, if not take us over another horrible economic cliff and cost billions of dollars for American consumers.

Given the seriousness of it and the fact that we are very close to having that happen and the fact that we are the world's leader, 30 years ago President Ronald Reagan warned about the consequences of the richest, most powerful nation in the world suddenly running out of money to pay its bills. He said:

The full consequences of a default—or even the serious prospect of a default—

As people are flippantly discussing these days—

by the United States of America are impossible to predict and awesome to contemplate.

Denigration of the full faith and credit of the United States of America [would cause] incalculable damage.

This is President Ronald Reagan.

President Reagan reminded Congress:

Never before in our history has the Federal Government failed to honor its financial obligations. To fail to do so now would be an outrage.

His words.

The Congress must understand this and bear full responsibility.

We know if the United States defaults on its obligations, if we don't pay our bills, the result will be a financial crisis worse than what we went through in 2008. Frankly, I don't want any part of that. I know what happened in Michigan in 2008, 2009. I know our Presiding Officer, the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts, understands that as well, what happened to families and businesses all across America. To even come close to that is irresponsible.

If that were to happen, 57.5 million Americans could very well not get their Social Security checks on time.

My mom called me the other night. She is 87 years old, doing great. She said I was at church on Sunday and my friends were asking: That couldn't really happen, could it?

I didn't know what to tell her. No, Mom, it should not happen. It has not happened before. But I can't promise, given the words of people on the other side of the aisle who believe it is no big deal or of what is being said by the Speaker and by the tea party Republicans in the House—I couldn't absolutely say to her don't worry about that.

Madam President, 3.4 million veterans might not get their disability benefits on time. We have just been debating whether we should make sure, as we must, that the VA is fully funded. Yet next week if we do not back up the full faith and credit of the United States of America, veterans could very easily be in a situation of not getting

disability checks or seniors' Social Security, Medicare. Children, families, communities, businesses, farmers, that is who will pay the cost of this default. Middle-class families will pay the cost of this.

It will be catastrophic in terms of interest rate increases and loss of jobs if we do not stand together as Republicans and Democrats in the Congress of the United States and back up the full faith and credit of the United States of America.

According to Goldman Sachs, if we adopt the "China first" model of only paying the interest on our debt, which has been proposed by the House, where we pay some of our debts but not others, the drag on our economy would be massive. They estimate we would lose 4.2 percent of our gross domestic product. To put that in perspective, when the recession hit bottom in 2009 we lost 4.1 percent of GDP, from the peak in 2007. That was the worst recession in our lifetime.

This is not a game. This is serious.

Even more concerning to me is that this would drive up borrowing costs for families, for small businesses, for our manufacturers who are back on their feet now and roaring and bringing back our economy. For every 1-percent increase in interest rates, we are told Americans will pay \$75 billion—\$75 billion lost to the economy. When Republicans in the House took us to the brink of default 2 years ago, which resulted in the lowering of America's credit rating for the first time in history—even though we didn't default, just talk of default ended up lowering our credit rating for the first time in America's history—it cost the average family buying a home at the time about \$100 every month for the life of their mortgage in higher interest rates; \$100 a month for the life of the mortgage. That is outrageous and irresponsible.

That same default crisis in 2011 cost taxpayers \$19 billion in additional interest when our credit rating fell and interest rates went up. Where did that \$19 billion go? Right back on top of the national debt, not only adding to the national debt, it threatens to erase America's retirement savings. In 2011, over \$800 billion was lost in retirement accounts after the House Republicans played politics with the full faith and credit of the United States of America.

If I might just take 1 more minute, I ask unanimous consent.

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

Ms. STABENOW. This time, if we actually default, the fall could be even worse and the damage could be permanent. This is the greatest, wealthiest, most powerful country in the world and it is outrageous that this would even be considered.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter from the National Association of Manufacturers, expressing their deep concern about the possibility of default.

I will share, finally, remarks of the chairman of AT&T.

It is unthinkable that the United States could default on its financial commitments and it would be the height of irresponsibility for any public official to consider such a course.

Our country deserves better. The people of this country deserve better. We have to do better for them.

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

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
MANUFACTURERS,
October 8, 2013.

THE PRESIDENT,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT, SPEAKER BOEHNER AND LEADERS PELOSI, REID AND MCCONNELL: On behalf of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)—the largest manufacturing association in the United States, representing small and large manufacturers in every industrial sector and in all 50 states—I write to strongly urge you to act as soon as possible to raise the statutory debt limit.

The failure of policymakers to address this critical issue is injecting uncertainty in the U.S. economy, hampering the ability of manufacturers and the broader business community to compete, invest and create new jobs. In a recent survey of NAM members, almost two-thirds of respondents said it is extremely important for the President and Congress to make progress on funding the government for fiscal year 2014 and extending the nation's debt ceiling. More than 90 percent said that addressing the nation's fiscal challenges was important for their company.

Manufacturers believe the United States must meet our financial obligations to ensure global investors' continuing confidence in the nation's creditworthiness. Our nation has never defaulted in the past, and failing to raise the debt limit in a timely fashion will seriously disrupt our fragile economy and have a ripple effect throughout the world. In particular, a default would put upward pressure on interest rates, raising both the short- and long-term cost of capital and discouraging business investment and job creation. In addition, a default would create an uncertain fiscal environment that will discourage foreign direct investment in the United States that could harm our economy for years to come.

Our nation's economic future depends on your actions. Now is the time to rise above partisan differences and put the nation's best interests first by addressing the debt limit. Thank you in advance for the leadership that will be necessary to appropriately resolve this critical issue.

Sincerely,

JAY TIMMONS.

Ms. STABENOW. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I am glad to join this debate, which throughout the afternoon has been peppered with the assertion that

either Majority Leader REID or the President or Democrats in general will not negotiate—that we will not negotiate. I remember when I was younger there was a radio commentator, a man named Paul Harvey, and his little motto in his radio bits was to surprise you with “the rest of the story.”

On “will not negotiate,” we don't even have to go to the rest of the story. Go to the rest of the sentence. The rest of the sentence is that the President and the majority leader will not negotiate—while the other side is holding hostages, while the tea party is holding hostages.

Here is what our former colleague, my former ranking member on the Budget Committee, Senator Judd Gregg, has said about this:

A small group of Republican legislators led by the junior Senator from Texas, decided to take as hostages government operations and the raising of the debt ceiling.

Those are exactly the hostages, Federal employees who cannot work, people and businesses that want or need Federal services, those families we have heard so much about today who lost loved ones on the field of battle and cannot get their death benefits.

There is an even bigger hostage out there, which is the threat of a catastrophic default which would be the result of a failure to lift the debt limit. Our country has been through a lot, through Civil Wars and world wars, through depressions and calamities of various kinds. Through all of that we have never defaulted on our debt. But there is a group in Congress so desperate that they are willing to use that, that threat as a hostage for leverage in negotiations.

When colleagues on the other side invite us in the old phrase, “Come, let us reason together,” let us negotiate, they do not mean come let us reason together, let us negotiate; they mean let us negotiate, but we want a black-jack in our pocket. If the negotiations don't go just the way we want, we want to keep hundreds of thousands of Americans out of their jobs and we want to threaten the economic security of this country.

There is a difference that every American understands between negotiating and negotiating while threatening the hostages. I will say that sanctimoniously offering to release a hostage here or a hostage there when a program becomes too popular or there is too much scrutiny on the damage that one thing is doing, to say, oh, we will give up that hostage, we will let us vote on that hostage, doesn't change the principle. There is a difference between negotiating in good faith, negotiating on the merits, and negotiating with threats to hostages. That is no road to go down. That is a very dangerous threat.

As President Reagan warned us:

Congress must realize that by failing to act they are entering very dangerous territory if we don't raise the debt limit. Never before in our history has the Federal Govern-

ment failed to honor its financial obligations. Too fail to do so now would be an outrage.

Ronald Reagan:

The Congress must understand this and bear full responsibility.

We have to address these problems in the traditional order of government with real negotiations because if we don't, if we yield to hostage-taking as the new way of governance in this country, where does it end? The continuing resolution that we proposed that the Speaker has refused to have a vote on—in all this time he has never had a vote on the continuing resolution that we passed that would open the government—it would only extend the operations of government for 6 weeks. We would be back at it again. What would the price be next time? After we defunded ObamaCare, would they want to privatize Social Security? They tried that before. Over and over, the popular will has to rule. That we do through our American procedures. The vaunted procedures of our American system of government would be lost in a devil's game of threats and hostage-taking on both sides because two can play at this game if those are the new rules. We don't want to go there.

America is a great country and in part we are a great country because our democracy is an example to the world. We are no example to anyone when we legislate by threats of default, disaster, and confusion, to use the felicitous phrase of our colleague from Alabama.

There is a condition that sometimes befalls pilots called target fixation. It happens when a pilot diving on a target becomes so fixated on hitting that target that they become disoriented with their surroundings. The worst thing that befalls somebody who has target fixation is that they crash the plane.

Right now we have Republican target fixation on repeal ObamaCare. Imagine passing it 40-some times in the House, which they have done. If that is not a sign of target fixation, I don't know what is. Not seeing the damage that is being done by closing down the government, not seeing the damage to families, not seeing the damage to employees, not seeing the damage to people who depend on government services and licenses and safety checks seems to me to be a sign of target fixation.

If they have target fixation this badly, they may not even see President Ronald Reagan's warnings of how dire and dangerous it is to play around with our debt limit. On the House side, they are already talking about playing around with our debt limit. They want to go into the danger zone, and who knows how close to the flame they are willing to fly. When they have target fixation, their judgment is not very good.

They are certainly not seeing the damage to American values and American procedure that an insistence on

legislating by holding hostages and threatening them does. It does damage to our values, and it does damage to our procedures.

A great observer of the American system of government once described procedure as its bone structure. We can throw it all out, the Constitution, the bicameralism, and we can go back to the basic animal state that whoever can make the worst threat wins the argument. That is not the American way. The American way isn't to win the argument by seeing how many people you can put at risk and how badly you can threaten them, but that is the stage we are in right now.

Let's negotiate, indeed, but let's negotiate as Americans. Let's negotiate under our proper procedures. Let's open the government. There is no reason for it to be closed other than bargaining leverage and hostage-taking. There is no other reason. That is exactly why the tea party has shut down the government, just for that purpose. They say it. They use nicer words. I think the word that was used earlier in debate today was to create adequate incentive. When somebody else is holding hostages, we have incentive, but it is not an appropriate incentive.

So open the government and stop threatening the debt limit. That is wildly irresponsible. If they don't believe us, believe Ronald Reagan, believe the Secretary of the Treasury, believe the National Association of Manufacturers, believe the CEO of AT&T, believe virtually every responsible, knowledgeable adult who has observed what the dangers are of blowing the debt limit and default.

Open the government, stop threatening the debt limit and, by all means, let's negotiate. We could set a date tomorrow. I am sure the President would have a meeting at the White House the next day. Anything people wanted could be on the table, but they would have to come in and negotiate like Americans. They would have to negotiate on the merits fairly and not with a blackjack in their back pocket, with threats that if they don't get what they want, they are going to start wrecking things such as our economy and our government. That is not the right way to proceed. If we go down that road, who knows what evil lurks at the end.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, I have listened very carefully to the two previous speakers on the floor, and I understand a lot of their frustration. We are where we are.

I think we have two big problems. Actually, we have two major problems. One is our country is bankrupt. People don't like to hear that, but let me give the facts. The total unfunded liability of the United States of America is \$126 trillion. If we add all the net worth of everybody in the country and all the assets of the Federal Government and

all the assets of the States and combine them, we have \$94 trillion worth of assets. We are already in the hole \$30 trillion. That doesn't include the \$17 trillion in debt we have.

So I would like to correct a couple of things. One, the Senator from Michigan mentioned that we were downgraded because of the impasse in Congress. No, we were downgraded because Congress has failed to address the real problems of our debt and deficits. Go read their statements. It had nothing to do with action here. It had to do with the fact that we will not address the biggest problems in front of us.

I ask unanimous consent to have some scissors on the floor because I wish to make a point in a minute.

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

Mr. COBURN. We have a credit card. I want you to think about your own personal life that if, in fact, you have a limit on your credit card and your financial situation worsens, you are still paying the payments, but you are not bringing down the principal on your credit cards and you are not earning significantly more money and you go to Citibank or American Express or Chase and say: I want you to raise my limit. The first thing they are going to ask you is: What have you done to improve your financial situation so we might consider raising your credit limit? That is what happens to every other American.

We have this big talk about a debt limit. There is no debt limit in this country. We have increased it every time it has come up. There is no limit right now in this country on the debt we have.

We hear all of these speeches about the risk. You know what the real risk is? The risk is continuing to do nothing to address the underlying problems of our country. The risk is continuing to add entitlement programs that have no way to pay for themselves and no reform of the entitlements we have today. That is the risk.

How does that play out? We have heard all of these dire warnings of what will happen. What is going to happen to your children and grandchildren is what has happened over the last 15 years in this country. Do you realize that the average median income in real dollars now is at the same level it was in 1989? We are going backward right now. We are not addressing the real problems.

Since I am a doctor, I will put it in medical terms. If, in fact, you treat symptoms of disease by raising the debt limit rather than treating the real disease, which is reforming the problems, reforming our spending, quit having 100 percent involvement by the Federal Government in everything Americans do, if you continue to borrow the money and treat that as the symptom, when there is a lack of oversight by Congress and lack of real work by the Members of this body to actu-

ally eliminate waste, which is over \$250 billion a year as outlined by the Government Accountability Office, we ignore that for the political arena we have seen over the last couple of weeks in Washington.

The real disease is not fixing the real problem. All of the politicians—Republicans and Democrats alike—want to give you a soft answer. Here is the answer: If you are \$30 trillion in debt that you cannot pay for, what you have to do is have everybody have some pain, but we refuse to do that. There is no leadership in Congress to address the real disease we are facing. This is a government that has totally ignored the enumerated powers, totally ignored the 10th Amendment. We have a Justice Department that ignores the rule of law in terms of how they decide what they will enforce and what they will not enforce on a political basis rather than on what the law says. Those are the real problems in front of us.

We have heard all the dire warnings about how we cannot raise the debt limit. What does default mean? They always say we can't raise the debt limit, but they will not talk about what default means. Default in the international financial community means you will not pay the interest and you will not pay back the principal on your bonds. That will never happen to us. It would require less than 6 percent of the cash we are taking in now to manage the debt we have right now—less than 6 percent.

So only somebody who wants to hurt us further would play the political game if we ever got there. I am not saying we should get there, but if we got there, it would only be to play the political game to not pay Social Security or not to pay Medicare. We have more than enough money to do that. But what we have is a bloated, oversized, inefficient, ineffective Federal Government that nobody wants to hold accountable except the American people.

So the question is, Who gets to decide? Congress obviously is not deciding very well. The President has not shown any leadership. Maybe it is time for the American people to decide. Maybe it is time to take some of the power away from Washington and restore it to where our Founders thought it should reside: by respecting the enumerated powers very specifically listed by our Founders with great commentary so it would not be distorted, but we have distorted it anyway. We need to reembrace the 10th Amendment which says: Everything that is not specifically enumerated in these powers is left to the power of the people and the States.

We find ourselves with a credit card. This happens to be our debt. The number I chose to put on here was our debt this morning: \$16,747,458,528.90. We need to cut this up just like we would do for an adolescent or young adult kid when you are responsible for their credit

card. If they are not responsible, you cut up the credit card. You fix the real problem. You don't continue to ask for an increase in their propagate spending.

Members of Congress who will not do oversight and get rid of \$250 trillion of fraud, waste, and abuse every year should not be rewarded, but that is what we will end up doing because we don't have the courage, nor the leadership, to address the real problem in front of our country. The real problem is cowardice. The real problem is to not recognize where we are and not act on making decisive decisions.

We heard how bad it will be if we don't raise the debt limit. I agree, it will be tough. There will be ramifications. How bad will it be if we do? What happens to your children? What happens to the declining family income in this country if we continue to let the Federal Government run uncontrolled and out of control? What happens if we continue to not hold Congress accountable for forcing efficiencies on the Federal Government.

I know what could be done. There was an agreement called the Budget Control Act, and what it did is it forced sequester. Sequester is a stupid way to cut funding in the Federal Government, but it is far better than not cutting it at all.

What has the sequester done? The sequester has forced agencies—because Congress will not force them because we are afraid we might offend somebody—to start making choices. They are still making tons of bad choices. For instance, on the last day of the State Department's budget, they spent all the remaining money. They just spent \$5 million for new crystalware for all of our embassies. Do we have \$5 million? What is wrong with the crystalware we have now? They had to spend the money because they couldn't come back to Congress and say we saved \$5 million.

We are addressing the wrong problems. We are not holding people accountable. Consequently, maybe it is time for the States and the people to exert some common sense on us. I dare say there is not one Member of this body who would let their adolescent child run up a bill and then not eventually try to intercede on a credit card but just let them continue to run it up.

Congress and the U.S. Government is that adolescent child. We are the adolescents and the people and the States are the grownups. We are at an impasse, and it does kind of sound like a kid. I am not going to talk to you. I don't like the way you did that.

We had the majority leader the other day claim that the House was out of bounds because they got to pick and choose what we pay for. It just so happens that in the Constitution, that is what it says. The House of Representatives gets to pick and choose. All spending bills start in the House. They have to start in the House. They get to pick and choose. We don't have to ac-

cept it, but they get to pick and choose. So there is a lack of understanding on the basic concepts our Founders set up.

We know the history and they know the history of republics. Republics always die. There isn't one that has survived as long as we have. They decline and die over the same thing: They get in trouble financially.

We are in trouble financially. We are \$30 trillion in the hole, plus another \$17 trillion in debt. Wouldn't it be smart if we started addressing that problem before we blankly allow an increase in the level of the credit card? Actually, what we should do is cut this credit card up, which is what I am going to do because that is the way I vote. I think it is time we quit borrowing money—actually, I think I better tear it up—it is time we quit borrowing money for the future of our kids. It is time we quit mortgaging their future. It is time we start taking responsibility for the actions of the Federal Government rather than giving excuses on why we can't get together and address the real problems of this country. Congress fails to do the oversight.

We just had a hearing yesterday where we showed one of the problems inside the Social Security and disability system. It was a bipartisan hearing, with lots of work done. There are real problems. The trust fund for those people who are truly disabled in this country will run out of money within 18 to 24 months. The Finance Committee hasn't offered any bill to fix it. The House Committee on Ways and Means hasn't offered any programs to fix it. Yet it is going to be bankrupt. What does that mean for somebody who is truly disabled? It means their check is going to get cut. Now tell me whether we would rather spend \$5 million on new glassware for our embassies—crystal—or \$5 million for someone who is truly disabled. That is where the real decisions need to be made, but we won't make them.

If we talk about our national debt—when I came to the Senate in 2005 every American owed \$24,000 on the national debt. It is now almost \$53,000—in a little over 8½ years. So we now owe 2½ times what we used to owe. How did we get there? Why did we let that happen? Why don't we learn to live within our means? Is there always a political reason? Is there always a reason where we can game somebody and say they don't care if they don't want to do this? They certainly couldn't care about Americans if they want to spend money we don't have on things we don't need.

If we look at the \$125.8 trillion, that works out to \$1.1 million per family. Think about that. That is our unfunded liabilities, and that is going to come due over the next 50 years. If a person has children or grandchildren, as I do, I really don't want their opportunities to be totally limited by this debt load we have.

So we have all of this politicking and posturing and political expediency

going on in both bodies, and nobody is talking about what the real problem is. The real problem is we are spending a lot of money we don't have, and we are borrowing from other countries for things we don't absolutely need.

The second part of the problem is we have programs that are designed to benefit people which are riddled with waste and fraud—\$100 million in Medicaid and Medicare. Nobody really questions that number. It has been authenticated by four separate studies outside of the government, and inside the government we say it is \$80 million. Why would we continue to let a system run that has that kind of fraud in it?

We are getting ready to crank up the Affordable Care Act—we are cranking it up—and we have now said we are not going to authenticate somebody's reliability as to their income? What do we think the fraud rate on that is going to be? We know what the fraud rate is with the child tax credit. It is well over 20 percent. In the earned-income tax credit, we know it is well over 20 percent. So \$1 out of every \$5 we pay out is to people who don't deserve it. We are going to see the same thing with this. Why would we do that when we have this kind of problem in front of us?

In the last 2 years our debt limit has increased twice what our economy has grown. For every dollar of new debt we take in, we are getting about 2 or 3 cents of economic growth out of that new debt. It used to be that when America borrowed a dollar, it would get 35 or 40 cents of growth out of that debt. So in the last 2 years we have increased the debt limit \$2.405 trillion and the economy has grown less than \$1.2 trillion over the last 2 years.

We are adding \$26,000 to our national debt every second—every second. There is no question that our economy is growing some—some—far less than marginal. Why isn't it growing? It isn't growing because the American people don't have confidence in the future. How do we restore confidence in the future? We restore confidence by modeling a behavior that says we are going to act responsibly with our future, which means we are going to make the hard choices, even if it costs us our political career, to solve the problems in Washington so the generations that follow us will not suffer a lower standard of living but also so we can instill confidence in the American economy.

There is \$3 trillion in cash sitting in this country right now—not Federal Government money, private money—\$3 trillion. Why is it sitting there and why is it not being invested? That \$3 trillion would create 700,000 or 800,000 new jobs a year—that \$3 trillion. Why is it not being used? Because people don't have confidence in the future.

I want to tell a story about Virgil Jurgensmeyer. Virgil grows mushrooms and other vegetables in a business. This past August he told me he was thinking about expanding his business, a \$5 million expansion, adding a

couple hundred jobs in a very small town in northeastern Oklahoma. He was afraid to do that. He has plenty of business. He is buying \$50,000 to \$100,000 of product from his competitor every month because he can't produce it. He says: I don't think it is worth the risk right now given where our country is. That is happening all across this country. There is no confidence.

It brings me to another point I wish to speak about. We are not just bankrupt as a nation. Our leadership is bankrupt. Leadership is about creating a vision and bringing people together, not creating controversy and dividing people. It is not about pointing out the worst flaws of somebody. It is about reinforcing the best flaws. It is about selling the confidence that we can do this together.

Do my colleagues realize we can do this together as a nation? There isn't a problem in front of us that we can't solve if we choose to solve it. Do my colleagues remember the debt commission? I was a member of that committee. We voted on some big plans that would have solved a lot of the problems we are facing this very week in this body. I didn't like every bit of it, but it was a chance to try to solve—bring together both sides and solve it. Not once was it taken up on the floor by the majority leader. The President never embraced it—his own commission, his own fiscal commission—never embraced it. It was the greatest failure of leadership I have ever seen. We had conservatives and liberals agreeing that here is a plan we can work out. Yet it was thrown away.

With the politics we see in Washington today, the only time we are going to solve these big problems is when both political parties take the pain evenly. Nobody wants to do that. Everybody wants to win. It is all short-term political expediency.

In the words of my friend Erskine Bowles, where we are today is the most easily predictable problem we ever would have seen. All we have to do is look at the path of the numbers. It is true that our deficits are down a little bit, that we raised \$70 billion in taxes last year, and the economy is growing. It just shows what potential there is if we would put the economy on steam, where we had confidence. We could have had \$500 billion, \$600 billion a year in revenues to the Federal Government. But we won't do that.

Today we find ourselves in worse condition than we were in 2011, and in 2011 we were told we can't do big things. We have to wait.

So we had a debt limit increase. So tell me how we have gotten better since then. We have unfunded liabilities that are growing faster every year. Our true debt-to-GDP ratio is now over 100 percent, counting all debt, internal and external. We have not done it.

Hundreds of thousands of Federal workers right now are furloughed because Congress—not Republicans, Con-

gress—has failed to do its job, has failed to compromise, has failed to reach a meaningful agreement that gives both groups something they can claim they actually worked on the real disease.

Madam President, how much time have I consumed?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has consumed 23 minutes.

Mr. COBURN. I will finish. Would the Chair let me know in about 28 minutes?

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

Mr. COBURN. Let me describe also what is going to happen in about 20 years, maybe 10. If we don't address these problems, it won't matter what the debt rating agencies say; we will have developed a pattern that says we think we can continue to borrow and continue to raise the debt limit and not make the structural changes that put us on a path to solvency. So what does that look like? What that looks like is borrowing costs going up.

My friends all say—and the President said today—maybe our borrowing costs will go up if we don't, in fact, raise the debt limit. Guess what. Our borrowing costs are going up every day we don't address these problems whether we address the debt limit or not because eventually the rest of the world is going to say: We don't think they are willing to cut up the credit card. They are not willing to make the sacrifices necessary to put their country on a path of prosperity.

We have all the capabilities in the world to address our problems. We do not have the leadership that will get us there. I am not just directing that at the President; I am directing that at my own party.

So what is the solution?

I am going to spend the next couple days outlining waste in the Federal Government, fraud in the Federal Government, duplication in the Federal Government. But the solution is called sacrificial leadership. It means modeling the behavior that says you are willing to give up something—maybe the prestige of being in office—to actually fix the long-term problems of our country. It is leadership that calls out the best in us instead of pointing out the worst in us. You do not see that very often here. You did when I first came. You certainly do not now, and that is a function of leadership in the Senate.

Majority Leader REID and I do not agree on much. That is obvious. But in a previous discussion on the Senate floor, Leader REID said: "Meaningful deficit reduction requires shared sacrifice." We are never going to get there unless everybody shares in it.

The other point I would make is that we are living off the next generation right now. We are going to borrow \$2,000 against the future of every man, woman, and child in this country this year alone. They are going to have to pay it back. Another way of putting it is that 1 out of every 4 hours you work,

the Federal Government right now is confiscating—of everybody in our economy. It is soon going to be 2 out of every 4 hours you work.

Our country was founded on the idea of liberty and freedom. When the confiscatory rates that will have to be there to pay back our debt or to at least borrow more money come, half of your work is going to be for the Federal Government—not your State or local governments; it is going to be to pay the bills of the Federal Government. So money that is going to go for interest is money that is not going to be invested. It is money that is not going to improve education. It is not going to invent the new technology.

So I believe we can solve our problems, but I think it requires an informed public. Do you realize the Federal Government is twice the size it was in 1999? It is twice that size. It is two times as big as it was in 1999. Think about that for a minute. If you extrapolate that, that means in another 12, 13 years, it is going to be four times as big as it was in 1999. The question comes: Are you getting value? Is it efficient? Is it productive? Is it what we want to do?

I think we can cheat history as a republic. As a constitutional republic, I think we can cheat history. I do not think we have to go down the path every other republic has gone down, but it is going to require real leadership and shared sacrifice on the part of everybody in this country. It is going to require that we take the spending out of the Tax Code for the well-heeled who have placed special benefits in the Tax Code for themselves. It is going to require that we reform Medicare.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has consumed 28 minutes.

Mr. COBURN. I thank the Presiding Officer.

It is going to require that we reform Medicare, that we fix Medicaid, that we control how the Federal Government buys and uses things. It is going to require us to eliminate multitudes of duplicative programs that have no real benefit other than to benefit the politicians. It is going to require shared sacrifice.

So we can go down that path, unite our country, bring us together with a vision that through this, together we can all accomplish what is needed for our children and grandchildren or we can continue this petty little kindergarten game that is going on in Washington right now where everybody's nose gets bent out of shape, saying they are right or they are right, and playing off the American people.

None of us in Washington are right. The Founders were right. The enumerated powers were right. The 10th Amendment was right. We are dead wrong. It is time we grow up and start understanding the vision of our Founders that secures our liberty and preserves our future.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, before he leaves the floor, I want to thank the Senator from Oklahoma for his commitment to this issue, for his candor. We do not necessarily agree on every single thing, but I do know he is a man of great conviction and we are lucky to have him in the Senate. It is my hope we can get to a place where we actually are together addressing these budget issues in a way that is not management by crisis or one across-the-board cut after another but actually is a thoughtful plan to relieve our children and our grandchildren of this burden we are threatening them with.

So, through the Chair, I thank my colleague.

Madam President, I come to the floor today, after the Senator from Oklahoma described today as a day of petty kindergarten political games, to talk about a place where they are not playing any of those right now, and that is a town in Colorado that I represent called Estes Park, which has been a beacon of resilience. It is in the mountains just northwest of Boulder. It is the gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park.

I can see from the Presiding Officer's reaction that she may have been there.

The town has several thousand residents and hosts close to 3 million visitors a year, including an average of over half a million visitors in the month of September.

This time of year is peak tourist season. The weather is beautiful. The aspens' leaves are even more beautiful than the weather, and the elk famously wander through the park and through the town. Whether you are coming to rest or recreate, Estes Park welcomes you, and it always has.

In 2011 visitors generated \$196 million in tourism spending and supported more than 2,700 jobs. By some estimates tourism accounts for 43 percent of local employment. But when the floods hit in Colorado, Estes Park was almost entirely cut off from the outside world.

As shown in this picture, here is Route 34 going to Estes Park.

Two of the major roads into town were wiped out for miles at a stretch, leaving only one road into town. Many homes and businesses were destroyed. But the residents of Estes Park picked themselves up and began the recovery process. Limited access to the town has been restored. Folks had just started opening their businesses again. Visitors had just started to return to Rocky Mountain National Park. And then Congress stepped in and dealt an unbelievably cruel blow by shutting down this government.

Let me quote what Estes Park resident Tom Johnson said on the Tuesday of the shutdown:

I think politicians are playing around, like they do, and it's the people who wind up—

“And it's the people who wind up”—with all the problems for it. Man, they did it to Estes Park, when they shut down that park.

Rocky Mountain National Park closed with the shutdown. Hundreds of campers have had to cancel their reservations, and likely thousands more canceled their plans to visit.

The Denver Post reported that if visitors to Estes Park decline by 70 percent, it could mean the loss of 1,100 jobs, \$90 million in spending, \$5.8 million in State sales tax revenue, and \$4.4 million in local taxes. This is one community in Colorado, one community in the United States of America tonight, as we horse around here in the Congress.

The shutdown is a kick in the teeth to our local governments and small businesses in their efforts to recover from these floods.

One of the area's more famous businesses is the Stanley Hotel. John Cullen, the hotel's owner, told us that while it is booking visitors for long weekend trips, it has been slow to bring in the usual number of guests during the week. He says it is because locals cannot come to Rocky Mountain National Park for the fall foliage. He tells us they have done everything they can to keep the hotel open because it is a major employer in Estes Park, but he is losing money on a daily basis.

Diane Muno is a local business owner in Estes Park, with four retail shops. The Spruce House and the Christmas Shop are two local Christmas and holiday stores; the White Orchid and the White Orchid Bridal Shop sell clothing and other apparel.

Some of these businesses have been serving customers in Estes Park since 1969. They are institutions in this Colorado community.

The flooding damaged three of four of her businesses. One was seriously damaged and has not yet reopened. The other two rushed to reopen to recover, and they would have been fine except we closed Rocky Mountain National Park, and that has slowed foot traffic in a significant way. Diane's October revenue for these four stores is down 67 percent—two-thirds down—from this point in October last year. She typically has 12 to 15 employees, but she is working a skeleton crew of 6.

Another business damaged by the floods was Kind Coffee. Its owner, Amy Hamrick, has been relying on Internet sales while she is working to reopen the store. The community has rallied around the store, as our communities that have been struck by the floods have done. It bought coffee beans and mugs and T-shirts online and helped clean up floodwaters. But the same story holds: She took a huge hit when the government shut down. Making horrible things worse, Amy's husband David Hamrick, a firefighter with the U.S. Forest Service, has been furloughed.

This is what this inability of Washington's politicians to get done the most basic function we have—to keep the government running—has wrought in this one Colorado community.

Amy told National Public Radio:

We carry on through the middle of October with tourism dollars and locals coming to see the elk rut and to go into the park and see the color. . . . And the national park is also our largest employer in town. So our community now has lost a lot of jobs in the interim.

This is exactly why it is the wrong moment for Colorado, for Estes Park, to have Washington's dysfunction come crashing down. They do not deserve it. They do not deserve it. But, as they are now saying in Estes Park, they are mountain strong and they will get through it. And I know they will.

Amy Hamrick took the time to remind us that 90 percent of the town is open, dry, and ready for customers. She said:

The town . . . is beautiful and the golf courses have elk on them 24 hours a day.

Estes Park, like much of Colorado, has taken a hit, but it will not stay down. The community continues to pull together and recover. As expected, its neighbors are going the extra mile to help everybody out.

This quote from Jeannie Bier captures the spirit of Colorado. She said:

We live down in Loveland and it is difficult for the people down there right now—

I know it is difficult down there because I was there last week with the mayor and county commissioners and others looking at devastation in Loveland—

but we also knew it is just as difficult up here in Estes and they are our neighbors, so we took the roundabout way to get up here to support Estes as well.

The floods will not deter them, and neither will the outrageous stupidity of this shutdown.

Rocky Mountain National Park is closed, but there are still plenty of other reasons to come and enjoy Estes Park.

Earlier today somebody who works with me named James Thompson spoke with the town's mayor Bill Pinkham and asked him what is the one thing he would want me to say on this floor. The message was plain and simple. He said:

Michael, tell them it's spectacularly beautiful up here. It's still a great experience. We're open for business!

This town has been through a lot and has risen to its challenges.

So I say to everybody, come to Estes Park. Enjoy the beauty. Shop at our businesses. Dine at our restaurants. And meet the folks who would not let a natural disaster or a manmade disaster stop them from succeeding. You can learn more about a trip to Estes Park at visitestespark.com.

To my colleagues, I urge you to come to Colorado for a different reason. Maybe we could all learn something from these incredible people about what it means to pull together in the face of a crisis.

For those of us playing politics with this shutdown and playing politics with this fiscal cliff, I would really encourage you to spend a single moment in one of our flood-ravaged towns. That

might bring some welcome clarity to the debate.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BENNET. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, most of us here in the Senate have read at least something about our Nation's founding. Although it is striking, what is almost always overlooked is the Founders' use of the language of "the republic."

Asked by a citizen on the street which was being created behind closed doors in Philadelphia, "a Republic or a monarchy," Benjamin Franklin famously said: "A republic, if you can keep it."

As with most foundational decisions, the Founders made this choice deliberately. The idea of democracy frightened Hamilton, Adams, and others, because they equated it with mobs in the street. They worried that mob rule would overcome rights bestowed not by their government but by their Creator. They studied the classics and their models were the Greek and Roman republics.

They set out to do something never done before, to create a republic of the scope and scale never before attempted, and one that could expand as the country grew.

Today we are the world's oldest and greatest democracy. During the last century, America has expanded the constitutional rights of women and people of color well beyond landowning White men, originally privileged. In our time, we have come to understand that democracies are about the rights of citizens, but a republic, the Founders understood, is about the duties of citizens, the obligations a citizen has to a society whose constitution guarantees his or her rights.

Basic duties are to pay taxes levied by a representative government, to defend our country when called upon, and to obey the law. Our Founders had something even greater in mind, qualities that would make a republic endure. Like republics from ancient Athens forward, they believed in popular sovereignty, based on citizen participation in government. They believed in the commonwealth, all those things we hold and value in common, such as our defense and our shared infrastructure, and the welfare of the next generation of Americans.

They believed in putting the common interest above personal or narrow interests, a sense of the national interest. How else could committed slave-owners and abolitionists form a country and a government?

They believed in resistance to corruption, those who would turn the na-

tional interest to personal gain. We were founded as a republic and we have become more democratic across time. We are democratic and republican. Interestingly enough, what came to be the semblance of the first political party in America called itself the Democratic Republicans. It was founded in 1791. Sounds pretty weird today, I know, but it simply meant those who believed in democratic equality and freedom, working to uphold the ideals of the Republic. One of our bedrock American principles is that we must protect our rights through performance of our duties. That is not some abstract political theory. This is a definition of who we are and how we must govern ourselves.

We have rights and responsibilities as citizens and as Senators. We have the right to free speech but the responsibility not to shout "fire" in a crowded theater. We have the right to assemble but the responsibility to do so peacefully. In this body we have the right to filibuster but the responsibility to govern on behalf of the American people.

But the fewer the Americans who exercise the most fundamental right, I would say duty, of voting, the more political influence extreme groups in our society have. This is where we find ourselves at the dawn of the 21st century, with a Senate that at times is dominated by a small faction that does not represent the mainstream of American political thought, and a House that is gerrymandered into dysfunction. This institutional paralysis has created a vacuum into which a million special interests happily roam.

Actually, I should call them narrow, not special, interests. From ancient Athens onward, narrow interests have been the enemy of every republic. That has never been truer than it is today. Keeping the Republic created by our Founders should concern every generation of Americans, including our own. The sovereign power belongs to all the people, not just a vocal few. It is our responsibility, it is our duty, as elected officials when that ideal is tested, to work together to restore a sense of the commonwealth and the common good that enabled us to prevail in world wars and to overcome depressions.

This is our cause, but we are stuck. We are stuck because we are fighting over yesterday's battles instead of seeking to anticipate, as our Founders did, how we will manage change. To one degree or another, all Senators and possibly all Americans are conservative. If conservative means to protect our Nation's principles and ideals, I am a conservative. If conservative means to preserve a culture of tolerance, justice, and equality, I am a conservative. If conservative means to respect the unique cultural heritage of America, I am a conservative. If conservative means to protect our natural heritage, I am very much a conservative.

But while we protect and preserve the best of what makes us who we are, we must adapt to change. Scarcely one

of us in the Senate has ever sought office without advocating some kind of change: change of officeholder, change of party, change of policy. That is good, because the future is arriving faster and faster and we have gotten no better at anticipating it.

Even with the seemingly endless crawls of the words "breaking news" at the bottom of our screens, no one predicted the Arab spring before it sprung. That is the most closely watched region in the world.

There are great historic tides that demand that we change and adapt to them in order to preserve and protect and conserve our central values. We do not live in a stagnant world. Indeed, we are living in the midst of great revolution that makes the 21st century as different from the 20th as the 18th century was from the 17th. We are living through what may be the peak years of change on the scale of the Industrial Revolution. But even though we may come here oriented to change, the institutions of government, Congress included, are oriented to the past. Our committee structure and our regulatory agencies imagine an economy that existed deep in the last century. We are designed to support incumbent interests, not the innovators that will drive job growth and wage growth in the 21st century. This is a fatal flaw, if we are ever going to tackle the growing income inequality that our Nation faces, an inequality that has been unmatched since 1928.

We are regulating the telegraph when the world is wireless. Just one example: Almost a year ago I visited Apple out in Silicon Valley to learn something about their work in education. A little over 4 years ago, when I was superintendent of Denver Public Schools, I did not spend one second thinking about how to apply a tablet to the education of our kids, because there was no such thing as a tablet—a little over 4 years ago.

Today the tablet, combined with platforms such as the iTunes platform, presents an unbelievable opportunity for our children and children all over the world to learn and to teach each other. It was amazing to see.

In any case, Apple presented a slide showing that 75 percent of their last 12 months of revenue was derived from products they did not sell 5 years before—75 percent of their revenue came from things they did not sell 5 years before.

We have not updated our Tax Code since 1986. I was in college in 1986. What are the chances that our Tax Code is helping drive job and wage growth in 2013, 27 years later, more than a quarter of a century later?

In this Congress and in this government, we are desperately out of sync with the world as it is. It is, in fact, an irony that we must change and adapt to preserve the principles that we treasure. But we must.

Today, many flying the tea party banner resist all change. Indeed, they

want to go back, often to a past that never existed, or to a time that has no relation to our time. Too often, their politics embrace old interests that will not drive us forward to an economy that is creating jobs and raising wages.

Our founding principles should not change. I agree with that. But our practices and methods must change to become relevant. These two parties, or three with the tea party, have to escape their orthodoxies for this to be possible. Efforts to maintain the status quo or to return to some mythical past are doomed to fail. That is simply because time and the tides of human affairs will not stand still. We do not control history and cannot dictate to it. Change is the one constant. How we attempt to shape it to our purposes, by creative, imaginative public policies will determine whether we can preserve the best of our past, our principles, our heritage, and our values.

Those who seek to protect our Nation against change by sitting on the beach before a massive incoming tide with shovel in hand will be swept away as surely as King Canute. As I mentioned earlier, anyone who believes their orthodoxy or their ideological orientation prepared them for the Arab spring or made us safer is deluded. Our job must be to create a shared understanding of the facts when we work in a town that is arranged to obscure them.

Despite the desires of nostalgia, we are not going back to the laissez faire world of Herbert Hoover. Social safety nets are here to stay to protect children, the elderly, the poor, the disabled, and to protect our ability to call ourselves a civilized nation. But even they will have to be changed if they are going to survive for the next generation of Americans.

The revolution of globalization and information has transformed the world's economy and cultures and societies all across the globe, including here in the United States. These revolutions, like the Industrial Revolution before them, cannot be stopped. It is up to us to decide whether we can accept this new reality and position our country to lead, as it has since our founding, or whether we shrink into an imaginary conception of what the world once was and what the United States once was.

With all of this change and pace of globalization comes fear of the future and a sense of loss of what once was. That is human nature. I do not exempt myself from that. At a time of uncertainty, it has become fashionable in some political circles to capitalize on it politically. This kind of demagoguery is not unknown in American history. Anytime Americans become fearful or worried, there have always been those who saw personal advantage in fanning those flames. But they do not join an honor roll of history, an assembly of our greatest leaders. Media attention, which is easy and cheap, is not a measure of leadership. Division does not require moral authority.

If we are at another of history's turning points, as many believe, as I believe, one road leads to the worst of our past. The other leads to a new definition of our freedoms. We treasure the freedoms incorporated in the First Amendment to our Constitution.

We remember at the height of the Great Depression that Franklin Roosevelt declared four new freedoms: Freedom of speech and worship and freedom from want and fear. Today, in the middle of what one might characterize as a political depression, let's consider some new freedoms for the 21st century: Freedom from foreign oil; freedom from false patriotism; freedom from the politics of division; freedom to create a constructive future; and, yes, freedom from unconstitutional government surveillance.

We have duties to perform far greater than merely funding the government. Just ask any poor child or her teacher in a typical American school. The good news is that fear has never and will not now dictate the fate of our Republic. History's dustbin is filled with failed demagogues. And we are not going back. But we need to hurry. The world is not waiting for us.

Americans want us to move forward into the 21st century with the imagination, creativity, adaptability, and values that have made this country so great from its founding. The stakes are simply too high in our time to allow our institutions to be crippled by politicians who color far outside the lines of conventional American political thought and who react with angry and mock surprise when their policy objectives are not achieved.

It is time to close this sorry chapter in the history of the Congress, reopen our government, preserve the full faith and credit of the United States, and work together as Senators from the various States on the people's business. I suspect that is why most of us wanted to serve to begin with.

Madam President, I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each during that period of time.

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

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING DR. PAUL R. RAO

• Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Madam President, today I wish to

honor an outstanding gentleman and friend, the man who guided me through years of speech recovery. Dr. Paul R. Rao, a recognized leader in his field of speech-language pathology, will retire from his work as vice president of Inpatient Operations at the National Rehabilitation Hospital, NRH, on October 17, 2013, his 67th birthday and 43rd wedding anniversary.

Dr. Rao began his professional career more than 32 years ago at MedStar Health and skillfully guided the development of the new speech and language department when MedStar opened the National Rehabilitation Hospital in Washington, DC, 27 years ago.

I met Dr. Rao when I entered NRH in February 2007, following an AVM and a month in intensive care. Over the months he became more than a therapist for me, he was a friend and a coach. When I returned to South Dakota in August of that year, Dr. Rao took his own time to join me as I greeted the people of South Dakota for the first time since the AVM. I continued to work with Dr. Rao in outpatient therapy, despite his demanding schedule as a vice-president for NRH, for another 3 years. I have been told that we were truly the odd couple, he the ebullient, loquacious Italian and I the stoic, reticent Norwegian.

He is widely recognized for his professional skills and is a sought after public speaker. Among his honors is the Clinical Achievement Award by the American Speech-Language Hearing Foundation that he received not once but twice, in 1989 and 2001. The DC Association for Healthcare Quality conferred on Dr. Rao the Janis Willis Annual Award for Educational Excellence in 2001 and the Beth Lang Award for Outstanding Leadership in 2003.

In addition, he is a national leader in medical rehabilitation, serving as president of the American Speech and Hearing Association, and as fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives.

Dr. Rao is the editor of *Managing Stroke: A Guide to Living Well After Stroke* published in 2000 and the lead editor for the second edition of this text in 2009.

He has made invaluable contributions to MedStar's National Rehabilitation Network and was recognized for his leadership as steward of the patient safety journey when he was awarded the National Rehabilitation Hospital's John W. Goldschmidt Award for Excellence in Rehabilitation.

I am pleased to take this opportunity to thank Paul for sharing his talents with me. I wish him and Martina a wonderful retirement. ●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:02 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following joint resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate: