



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 159

WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2013

No. 142

Senate

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable ANGUS S. KING, JR., a Senator from the State of Maine.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, we desperately need Your steadfast love to sustain us during this difficult time. Lord, give our lawmakers the wisdom to distinguish between truth and error and the courage to act upon those insights. Help them to avoid the shortcuts that lead away from Your will, as You make them Your eyes, ears, feet, and hands to bring solace to those who suffer. Give them a hatred of all hypocrisy, deceit, and shame, as they seek to replace them with gentleness, patience, and truth.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDING OFFICER led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The assistant bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, October 11, 2013.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable ANGUS S. KING, JR., a Senator from the State of Maine, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. KING thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

DEFAULT PREVENTION ACT OF 2013—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to Calendar No. 211, S. 1569, the debt limit bill.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 211, S. 1569, a bill to ensure the complete and timely payment of the obligations of the United States Government until December 31, 2014.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks, the Senate will recess subject to the call of the Chair to allow for a Republican special caucus meeting with President Obama.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this is my opinion. If we allow the United States to default on its debt for the first time in our glorious history, it will be a black mark on our reputation, and that is a gross understatement. There will be a financial disaster, and it will spark a global recession.

As I indicated when I began, this is my opinion, but this is not my opinion alone. If we listen to the economic leaders of this country, respected economists, bankers, and business leaders, this is what they say.

For example, yesterday the chief executive officer of the American Express, whose company is valued at almost \$80 billion, said this about default:

What's important to understand is if the United States hits the debt ceiling and is unable to pay its debts, the consequences will be immediate and dramatic. . . . If the U.S. defaults, the [global financial] system literally unwinds.

So no one misinterprets what he said, I will read it again.

What's important to understand is if the United States hits the debt ceiling and is unable to pay its debts, the consequences will be immediate and dramatic. . . . If the U.S. defaults, the [global financial] system literally unwinds.

His dire warning has been accepted and echoed by reasonable Members of Congress, including many Republicans. Even Speaker BOEHNER admitted in 2011, the last time Republicans forced this country to the brink of default, that failing to pay the bills would be catastrophic. He said:

Not raising the debt limit would have serious—very serious—implications for the worldwide economy and jobs here in America.

But this year Speaker BOEHNER seemed willing to risk default day after day, holding the full faith and credit of the United States hostage to extract extreme political concessions.

Yesterday it was very good to see my Republican colleagues, some at least, come around to the idea of a clean bill to avert default. Think about that. They are talking about extending the debt ceiling for 2 months—for 6 weeks. Please.

But some have admitted the clean bill to avoid default should be the standard. I certainly agree with that.

I repeat, we do not believe a 6-week delay of a catastrophic default is enough to give the economy the confidence it needs to continue growing and recovering. Using their theory, we would have another one of these periods of bedlam in Washington before the most important purchasing season at any time during the year, Christmas, right before Christmas, when people are beginning to buy things for Christmas.

● This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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We will vote tomorrow on a 15-month measure to ensure the United States lives up to its obligations, giving the economy certainty and stability over the long term. But Congress's work to restore faith in government won't end with avoiding default.

The Federal Government is still closed for business, causing hardship and heartbreak for millions of American families, such as the Trowbridge family in Reno, NV. They have a 17-year-old son Austin who was scheduled to receive an experimental bone marrow transplant at NIH in Washington. Without the transplant, he could die, just as his brother did 5 years ago from the same disease.

But the National Institutes of Health are shuttered, along with the rest of the government and the Centers for Disease Control. The assistant Democratic leader has laid out 79 different programs that would need to be reinstated to open the government, and we are getting them piecemeal—piece-meal.

In the meantime, people are suffering, not only Federal employees but the people who depend on them. We have four States that are trying to work something out with Secretary Jewell to have the States pay for opening national parks.

It is time for Republicans to give the Trowbridge family and others some relief. Reopen the government, the whole government, so kids such as Austin can get the treatment they need. Families of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty can't get the death benefits they deserve. Why? Because the government is closed. Every American family who relies on the Federal Government can't get the help and services they need.

Reopen the Federal Government, let's pay our bills, and then let's negotiate a sensible budget solution that secures our country's long-term fiscal leads.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

THE DEBT CEILING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Shortly I will join my Republican colleagues at the White House. It will be a good time to engage in a frank exchange of ideas with the President, if that is what he is looking for. But if all the President wants is to drag us over there to say he won't negotiate, that won't be particularly productive.

Throughout this crisis, the President has taken what you might call an unorthodox approach to governing. His basic position could be summed up in basically three words: He won't negotiate.

I think that has left many Americans scratching their heads. I know the President and the Democratic leaders in Congress want to borrow more money without any strings attached. But the rest of us actually want to enact some commonsense reforms to

get our debt under control, and we want to keep our commitments to the American people.

A key point is: Nobody wants a default. That is why, in 50 years of negotiations over multiple debt ceiling increases, we haven't had a single default, not a one. We have negotiated over debt ceilings for 50 years and never had a default. Let's put this hysterical talk of default behind us and instead start talking about finding solutions to the problems.

There are a variety of ways to get debt and spending under control, a lot of innovative reforms we should consider. But we need to talk to each other if we are going to make any of that happen.

I will bet that some of my Democratic friends have spending-cut ideas as well, and we would like to hear them. Let's sit down and talk this out. Members on both sides of the aisle in Congress are discussing solutions, and these discussions will continue as soon as we get back from the White House.

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 10:40 a.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 1:15 p.m., when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. KAINE).

DEFAULT PREVENTION ACT OF 2013—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, we are in the 11th day of the government shutdown. We have caused great harm to the people of this country. We have already caused harm. We have hurt the United States on the international front. The President, as I mentioned previously, was absent at the Asian economic summit. The Asian economic summit was the opportunity for America, the President of the United States, to be the headliner. Instead, the President of China, President Xi, became the headliner. There were questions asked about whether America is "open for business" with our trading partners. We have been hurt by this shutdown, make no mistake about it.

Our economy has suffered. Just the threat of defaulting—of not paying our bills—has hurt consumer confidence. Consumer confidence measures whether consumers are ready to go out and buy that car, buy that home, go on vacation. After the terrorist attacks on

the country on September 11, 2001, consumer confidence dropped by about 8.8 percent. I could go over other calamitous moments in history, but the debt ceiling debate today is about twice as damaging to consumer confidence as the 9/11 attack. We are talking about paying our bills when we talk about raising the debt ceiling—bills that have already been incurred. We are just paying the bills.

Mr. President, we are hurting our country. We are hurting our economy. We are wasting taxpayer dollars. We all talk about dealing with the debt. But in the government shutdown, we have wasted over \$2 billion of taxpayer money as a result of it.

As the Presiding Officer knows, in this region—Maryland, Virginia, the District—we have over 300,000 Federal workers who are on furlough of the 800,000 who are furloughed nationwide. That has a direct impact on families as well as our economy. These Federal workers are not buying in their local shops, they are not eating in the local restaurants. I stopped into a restaurant for a sandwich over the last weekend. I said: How are things going? The shopowner said: Terrible. Social Security employees are not here. I cannot keep my business open without their business.

We have seen the direct impact. I have tried to put faces on these numbers. We could talk about the statistics and the numbers. Let's talk about people, the individual people I hear from—I know the Presiding Officer has received calls from constituents in Virginia. It is the same story.

Over a week ago we brought in Amy Fritz who works at the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). She is a Federal worker who is furloughed. She tracks weather conditions and works on the computer models to predict how storms will behave. It is a pretty important position she has. She was telling of the hardship to her family. The Baltimore Sun reported today that at NOAA it is not just the Federal workers, it is the contract workers who are suffering. The Sun cited the example of Tiffany House, a person who lives in Hyattsville, MD. She is a single mom, a contract employee of NOAA, who has been laid off as a result of the shutdown. It is more than just 800,000 Federal workers; we have the contract workers who have been laid off as a result of the shutdown.

She said, "Even though we're furloughed and we are not getting paid, the bills keep coming."

There are a lot of hard-working families who live paycheck to paycheck. We are 11 days into this government shutdown. Families are wondering what they are going to do when it comes to paying their bills.

The Sun reported about Keith Tate from Hyattsville. He works for FM Talent Source in Silver Spring. Almost 30 percent of their contract employees, 92 people in total, have been laid off. He