

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

DEFICIT REDUCTION

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I say to the Presiding Officer, former Governor MANCHIN, I wish to follow on the comments we just heard from Senator PORTMAN, who, as he said, served in two administrations—in one of them as OMB Director, in the other as Trade Representative. Before that he had a distinguished career in the House of Representatives. He is someone I am fortunate to serve with on the Finance Committee. I have a lot of respect for his intellect and for his intellectual honesty.

Before I talk about the real reason I came to the floor, I feel compelled to say something. As former Governors, the Presiding Officer and I have made tough decisions on spending, we have made tough decisions on revenues, and they are not always well received by people. They are not always well received by people in our own party.

I like to say there are three or four things we need to do on this issue to make sure our deficits continue to head in the right direction. I do not worship at the altar of a balanced budget every single year. But what I do believe is that when the economy is strengthened and growing stronger, we ought to be having the deficit heading down, and when we are in a war or when we are in an economic doldrum, then I think it is appropriate to, in some cases, deficit spend.

Four things we need to do if we are serious about deficit reduction: No. 1, we need, in the President's words, entitlement reform that saves money, saves these programs for our children and our grandchildren, and does not savage old people or poor people. That is No. 1.

No. 2, we need, in my view, tax reform that brings down the top corporate rates—something more closely aligned with every other developed nation in the world. At the same time we are doing that, we need to generate some revenues for deficit reduction to match what we are doing on the spending side.

If you think about it, the Senator from Ohio knows and the Senator from West Virginia knows about tax expenditures: Tax breaks, tax credits, tax deductions, tax loopholes, tax gaps, add up over the next 10 years anywhere from \$12 trillion to \$15 trillion. We are going to spend more money out of the Treasury for tax expenditures than we are going to spend on all of our appropriations bills combined. If we could somehow capture 5 percent of \$12 trillion over the next 10 years for deficit reduction, that is \$600 billion. If we can match that in a Bowles-Simpson number, such as \$2 of deficit reduction on the expenditure side and \$1 on the revenue side, we could do about another \$2 trillion on deficit reduction on top of what we have already done. Is that a grand compromise that I want and I think the Senator from Ohio wants, I

know the Senator from West Virginia wants?

It is not a grand compromise, but I would call it a baby grand. A baby grand is certainly better than kicking that can down the road. The last time we kicked the can down the road at the beginning of this year, I remember saying on this floor: We kicked a rather large can down the road not very far. I am tired of doing that. I do not want us to do that.

We have maybe our last best chance here in this budget conference in order to do the kinds of things I talked about. Democrats do not want to give on entitlements. I am willing to do that. But I am only willing to do that if Republicans will give on tax reform that generates some revenues.

I mentioned there are three things to do. The third thing is to look in every nook and cranny of the Federal Government—everything we do. The Senator from Ohio is a member of the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee. He knows that we focus—we have large, broad investigative powers, oversight powers, authority over the whole Federal Government. There are all kinds of ways to save money, all kinds of ways to save money in this government of ours, just as there are all kinds in big corporations, big businesses. What we need to do is, in everything we do, look at that and say: How do we get a better result for less money in everything we do?

I do not know if my friends from Ohio and West Virginia hear this from their constituents, but I hear from Delaware constituents and folks outside of my State these words: I do not mind paying more taxes, I just do not want you to waste my money or I do not want to pay more taxes, but if I do, I do not want you to waste my money. I do not want to waste your money or mine.

The fourth thing we need to do to be serious about moving the economy and getting out of this kind of rut we are in right now is to be able to make sure we have some money around that we can invest in the things we know will strengthen our economy. Foremost among those is a strong workforce, capable workforce. The second thing is infrastructure, broadly defined, not just transportation: roads, highways, bridges; not just ports, not just airports, not just railroads, but broadband, all kinds of infrastructure-related items.

The third thing is R&D, research and development that will lead to technologies that can be commercialized, turned into products, goods, and services we can sell all over the world.

The fourth thing we need to do is to do an even better job—and Senator PORTMAN was the leader as our trade ambassador. He knows what it is all about in terms of knocking down trade barriers. But while we do entitlement reform, we do tax reform, while we look in every nook and cranny of the Federal Government, investing in the

three areas I mentioned, we have got to make sure when we develop these new products and services that we can sell them around the world without impediment, we can knock down trade barriers. The Senator has done a lot of work in that regard as well.

As the Senator leaves the floor, I will say there are many things for us to work on. I hope we will.

ARCHULETA NOMINATION

That is not why I came to the floor, but I thank the Senator for letting me join in that colloquy with the Senator from Ohio. The reason I came to the floor is to say a word on behalf of the President's nominee to be our next Director of the Office of Personnel Management. We have not had a confirmed OPM Director for the last half year. If you look across the Federal Government, the executive branch of the Federal Government, it reminds me a lot of what I call Swiss cheese, executive branch Swiss cheese.

We start with the Department of Homeland Security. We do not have a confirmed Secretary. We have one nominated, just nominated, just starting to go through the vetting process in the Senate. We have not had one for a month. The Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security—we do not have a confirmed Deputy Secretary. We have had “acting” for a number of weeks now, months. While the people who are in the acting capacity are very good people, very able people, it is not the same as having a confirmed Secretary of Homeland Security or confirmed Deputy Secretary.

There are any number of other positions in Homeland Security. As chair of Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee, I probably focus more on that than on the OMB, Office of Management and Budget, trying to make sure that Sylvia Burwell from Hinton, WV—the Presiding Officer knows her well. As a guy who grew up in West Virginia a little bit, born there, spent some time in Hinton, I have a huge respect for her. We worked very hard to get her management team, her senior leadership team confirmed. They are confirmed. She has a great team. We need to make sure that in our other departments we have from the top to way down the ranks strong people in confirmed positions.

OPM, Office of Personnel Management. The President nominated a woman I had never heard of earlier this year. He nominated a woman named Katherine Archuleta. Katherine Archuleta—I never met her, never heard of her. The first thing I learned about her is she has been the political director in the President's reelection campaign. She must have done a pretty good job if the results were to be examined. Maybe some people are troubled by that. If we stopped there, that does not define who she is or what she has done.

If somebody looked at my resume while I have been a Senator, if they think that is all I have ever done in my

life, they would be wrong. I have been privileged to be Governor of my State, leader, and, as the Presiding Officer has, chairman of the National Governors Association, one of the great privileges of my life. I was privileged to be a Congressman for a little bit, treasurer of my State, and before that a naval flight officer for 20 some years, retired Navy captain. That is who I am. That is not all of who I am, but that is a better resume. If people say all I have ever done is my current job or my last job, they would say: Well, he is not very well rounded.

I want us to take a minute and say—I am going to date myself on this, but a guy named Paul Harvey used to do the news. He used to say page 1, and then he would say page 2. I am going to go to page 2. Page 2 is a little resume of some other things she has done with her life. I want to quote one of our old colleagues, Ken Salazar, who has known her for decades and hear what he has to say about her. She was born and raised in Colorado, I think has spent almost more than half of her life there. She has been, from time to time, among other things, chief of staff at the U.S. Department of Labor. She did that for several years. She also served as senior advisor on policy and initiatives for the city and county of Denver, CO. There are more people who live in the city and county around Denver than live in a lot of States, including my own. She has done that job.

Before that, a number of years ago, she had a number of roles in the office of mayor of Denver, for almost a decade, including deputy chief of staff. In a city that size, again as big or bigger than a number of States, that is a lot of responsibility.

She has been a senior policy advisor at the U.S. Department of Energy.

She has also served at the U.S. Department of Transportation, first as deputy chief of staff, and then later as chief of staff.

She has been a professor at the University of Denver. She has done all kinds of things. But she is a whole lot more than what people see and say: Well, I know what her last job was. She has done a whole lot before that. I think that helps prepare her for this job.

There has been a bunch of people who have been nominated to serve as Office of Personnel Management Director since I guess the 1970s. I think this is the first time we have ever had a situation where the President's nominee—I do not care what party, Democrat or Republican—where the OPM nominee has required cloture or even a rollcall vote since the agency was created in 1978. That is 35 years ago.

I want to quote Ken Salazar, one of my dearest friends, who was a Senator, went on to become Secretary of the Interior, who has known Katherine Archuleta for 25, 30 years, really all of her adult life. Here is what Ken Salazar says about Katherine Archuleta. He says she is a “terrific” human being.

He goes on to say she “helped create modern Denver” as we know it as deputy chief of staff through Mayor Pena. She led economic development efforts throughout the city. She was instrumental in the creation of the new Denver International Airport. Ken went on to say she was “a star of the Clinton team in the U.S. Department of Transportation.” Star.

I say to my friends and colleagues, we have to get past this situation—I do not care if it is a Democrat President or Republican President—where we leave these gaping holes in leadership in confirmed positions. It is not good for our country; it is not good for these departments; it is not good for morale; it is not good for efficiency. We are interested in getting work done.

You can disable the government by shutting it down or you can disable the government and make it less effective, less efficient, by making sure we do not have key people in the top leadership positions. It makes a difference if people are confirmed as secretaries, deputy secretaries, and these other positions.

As the agency responsible for managing our Federal workforce, OPM's mission is critical to ensuring that our government runs efficiently. Unfortunately, vacancies at the top levels of leadership have limited OPM's ability to fulfill its mandate. They have backlogs in terms of the processing they are supposed to be doing in job applications and others, people applying for pensions. They need to be addressed.

In Katherine Archuleta's hearing before a subcommittee chaired by Senator TESTER, one of the things she made clear is that she would make that her priority, going after the backlog, which I would say God bless her if she is confirmed. I hope she will be.

But at any given moment, we are lacking critical leadership in any number of positions in just about every agency. It undermines the effectiveness of our government. While Congress and the administration have taken some steps to address this problem, the fact remains we still have more work to do to ensure we have got the talented people in place to make these critical decisions.

This week, we consider the President's nomination of Katherine Archuleta to be the next Director of OPM, Office of Personnel Management. I have talked a little bit about her background. One of the other people who knows her pretty well, another Senator from Colorado, is Senator UDALL. She was actually introduced at her confirmation hearings along with MICHAEL BENNET. Here is what Senator UDALL said about Katrina Archuleta. He said, “Throughout her career, Katherine has demonstrated her ability to lead, to motivate and to work constructively with a diverse range of people and personalities.”

Her story is a story of firsts. Although neither of her parents completed high school, they worked tire-

lessly to create better opportunities for their children. Throughout her career, she served as an example for women and Latinos and would be the first Latina Director of OPM.

The President nominated her to this critical position back in May. We held a hearing to consider her nomination—Senator JON TESTER held it. We voted her out of committee shortly thereafter. At her confirmation hearing, Ms. Archuleta committed to quickly taking steps to identify some of OPM's challenges, such as continuing to implement the multistate plan under the Affordable Care Act, reducing the retirement claims backlog to ensure retirees receive their full pension benefits without serious delays, which many retirees see today.

As to the recruiting and retaining the next generation of Federal employees, I think we have a nominee who is qualified. We have a nominee who has been vetted. We have a nominee who is ready to go to work. It is our responsibility to give her a swift vote, a thoughtful vote, but a swift vote here on the Senate floor, I hope this week, so she can go to work, take the reins at OPM, and begin directing this critical agency with oversight from us.

When the Presiding Officer was Governor of his State of West Virginia, when I was privileged to be Governor of my State, the tradition in Delaware is the Governor would nominate the people to serve on his or her cabinet. The tradition in our State was to nominate division directors under the cabinet secretaries. The tradition in my State is that the legislature, the senate to which the nominees were sent, would hold hearings, and would vote up or down without delay on those nominations. I think in the 8 years I was privileged to serve as Governor of my State, every one of them was confirmed. I do not think I ever lost a nomination for a cabinet secretary or for division director. That is the way we do business in Delaware. That is the way we ought to do business here.

If you have a nominee who is qualified, who has good integrity, is going to work hard, surround themselves with good people and has a track record he or she can be proud of, that nominee deserves a vote. Let's give this nominee a vote and let's give her a chance to go to work.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

SUPERSTORM SANDY

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Today it has been exactly 1 year since Superstorm Sandy hit my home State of New York and the surrounding region. Today is a very solemn day where we pause to ponder the unimaginable loss of 61 precious lives and the great collective pain as countless other lives were shattered. Over 300,000 homes were damaged or destroyed and businesses lay in rubble. Over 250,000 businesses were affected, many of which are still unable to open their doors.