

foursquare for this approach, which I would like to state does not ban any collection tool at all that is now used by the government, but it does require that there be basic transparency and accountability in how they are used.

(Mr. HEINRICH assumed the Chair.)

That is long overdue. Let me have my friend and colleague from Colorado wrap up and express to him how much I appreciate it.

I note somehow the Presidency of the Senate seems to be passed from one supporter of intelligence reform to another, since the distinguished Senator from Connecticut was just there. We have just been joined by Senator HEINRICH, who has been a very valuable partner in these efforts as well.

I thank him and allow the last word to be offered by the Senator from Colorado.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Again, you cannot go wrong with transparency. Transparency is a central tenet of America. In that spirit, I wish to recognize the Senator from Connecticut, Mr. BLUMENTHAL.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut is recognized.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues who led this effort. Well before I became involved, Senator UDALL and Senator WYDEN have helped to lead this effort before there was any real disclosure about some of the excesses that have been so dramatically revealed over the recent past. As a colleague in this effort, I thank them for their relentless courage in blowing the whistle, quite bluntly, telling America there was something wrong, even when they could not reveal exactly what was wrong, saying the American people would be outraged if they knew, if only they could be told. That kind of bravery and strength has given energy and momentum to this debate.

I am chagrined that we will not be debating and acting on it in connection with the National Defense Authorization Act if the present circumstances prevail and amendments are limited. I do believe it is past time to be talking about and acting on those issues, to move for greater accountability and transparency.

One of the amendments I have sponsored would call for a more adversarial process, to expose more of the truth before the judges who make these decisions through the appointment of a constitutional advocate.

The hour is late today. I hope at another time to talk about these issues in greater detail. But the time now is more urgent than ever to confront and address these shortcomings in the present system. I think the intelligence community itself will help us greatly and it has recognized this and all of America will benefit greatly, including their work.

I salute the talented and dedicated members of that intelligence community who have done their work literally in secret for so long, helping to save

Americans around the globe from terrorism and other threats. I think we need to change the system in ways that are worthy of the challenges they confront everyday, while at the same time making sure we have trust and confidence in America, trust and confidence in the system, trust and confidence in both the need for and the tools and weapons we use to further American intelligence in the combat against terrorism.

I again thank my two colleagues who are on the floor and tell them I look forward to working with them in the next few days. If it is possible to achieve these reforms, so be it; if not, we will continue to work.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. I thank the Senator from Connecticut and Senator from Oregon, the Presiding Officer who has been engaged in this and I know the Senator from Arizona who is here is interested in these discussions as well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

THE BUDGET

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, we are now at the halfway point in the countdown to the next budget deadline. By December 13 the budget conference committee has to report its plan for the remainder of this fiscal year 2014 and beyond. We are already 2½ months into the fiscal year. It is critical the conferees agree on funding government within the framework of the Budget Control Act.

As I have mentioned before on the Senate floor, the BCA, which places caps on discretionary spending, has provided us with a necessary dose of fiscal discipline. While the BCA is not a silver bullet which fixes all of our problems, it represents \$2 trillion in projected deficit savings that improves the Nation's long-term fiscal outlook. Without it, Federal spending would go unchecked, allowing the deficits to be even higher.

In 2013 the deficit reached \$680 billion; in 2014 it is estimated to be \$750 billion. Should Congress ignore the BCA, we will find ourselves even deeper in the red. In fact, some across the aisle have indicated that they want to spend a whopping \$91 billion more than the BCA mandates in 2014 alone.

Instead of offering smart spending cuts to eliminate waste and prioritize funds, many are compiling a list of their favorite tax hikes to replace the sequester. That action fails to recognize one simple point, a point I made on the floor last week and one I will make over and over. Washington has a spending problem, not a revenue problem. In fact, 2013 set a record for the most taxes ever collected, \$2.77 trillion. That is a 13-percent increase from 2012. Yet some of my colleagues want taxpayers to shoulder the burden of their plans to increase Federal spending.

While the BCA has proved to help moderate the Federal budget's hunger

for taxpayer dollars, make no mistake this budget is still bloated. Anyone who says there is nothing left to cut simply is not looking hard enough.

Last week I offered my suggestion for cutting waste at the Department of Agriculture. Just the programs I highlighted—and there are surely others—would save \$5 billion when compared with the President's budget. Today I wish to share some similar fiscal follies at the Department of Energy.

The Department of Energy spends an astonishing amount of taxpayer dollars on industries and technologies that are already well established in the public marketplace. But few examples stand out more than the agency's growing role in the automotive industry. Take the Vehicle Technology Program which is slated to receive \$575 million under the President's 2014 budget. This program conducts research and development into seemingly every facet of vehicle manufacturing from hybrid technologies to engine efficiency to advanced lightweight materials. It even goes so far as to draw marketing strategies to promote consumer acceptance of products such as electric vehicles and renewable fuels.

Is there anyone in America who does not know what an electric vehicle is or what it does? Yet we are supposed to spend money to improve consumer acceptance for these products. The Vehicle Technologies Program has also awarded hundreds of millions of dollars in grants to automakers, including Chrysler, Ford, and General Motors. Since 2010, the program has received \$1.2 billion in taxpayer funds. Curiously, the Vehicle Technology Program's official online listing of goals and accomplishments has not even been updated for 2010.

Another well-established industry benefiting from taxpayer largesse is wind energy. Read DOE's budget request which prominently highlights the wind industry's "great success in deploying planted-based technologies over the past 5 years." You may recall recently retired energy Secretary Steven Chu's admission that he considers wind a "mature" technology. Why then are we pumping money into a technology that even DOE indicates should be able to stand on its own?

A recent Navigant Research study made headlines when it reported that the United States is both the world's largest wind power market and home to the world's No. 1 wind power supplier, General Electric. A recent GAO report found that 82 Federal wind-related initiatives funded across 9 agencies cost \$2.9 billion in fiscal year 2011. This is for what we have been told is a mature technology.

What is more troubling than the sheer cost of the Federal Government's fragmented Wind Program is GAO's finding that more than 80 percent of those programs have overlapping characteristics. GAO's subsequent recommendation seems reasonable enough; that the DOE should formally

assess and document whether Federal financial support of its initiatives is actually needed. Yet the President's budget, released 1 month later, recommends an unprecedented level of \$144 million for the DOE wind energy program, just in 2014.

Wind's windfall from DOE comes on the heels of yet another extension of the multibillion dollar wind production tax credit. This tax credit was temporarily established more than two decades ago to encourage investment in the then-fledgling wind industry. This is two decades ago. Congress gave energy a 7-year window to take advantage of and prepare for the expiration of the original PTC in 1999—given 7 years.

But to the surprise of no one, parochial interests and a host of extensions continue to keep this zombie subsidy from expiring as designed. Today, as the credit supporters repeat their plea for just 1 more extension, they ignore America's debt-ridden reality and so the walking dead wind production tax credit, which is little more than a taxpayer-funded entitlement program, lives on. While I have singled out automotive and wind programs at DOE, similar arguments could be made for reducing or eliminating the Department's support for other established industries, including oil, natural gas, solar, and nuclear. Many of these programs are both unnecessary for further development of these technologies and are blatantly duplicative.

In fact, another GAO study identified a mind-boggling 679 renewable energy initiatives across 23 agencies in fiscal year 2010. Prominently featured in a report by my colleague from Oklahoma Senator COBURN, these redundant programs cost \$15 billion in 2010 alone.

Instead of continuing to pick winners and losers, Congress needs to reduce its footprint in well-established areas of the energy sector. Not only will this help level the playing field for emergency energy technologies that are actually preparing to compete in the marketplace, it would save taxpayers untold billions of dollars.

With just 1 month to go before the budget deadline, I urge my colleagues to reject the urge to fixate on raising taxes and instead help focus negotiations on smart, achievable spending reductions. By eliminating waste and prioritizing spending within the BCA framework, we can shore up this country's fiscal future. Turning out the lights on wasteful programs at the Department of Energy would be a step in the right direction.

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

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

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

COSPONSORSHIP

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to join the resolution which has been submitted by Senator DURBIN, and also a separate resolution submitted by Senators COLLINS and KLOBUCHAR, relating to the fight against Alzheimer's disease.

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

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, all of us have been touched by this dread and pernicious disease. Alzheimer's strikes families, loved ones, colleagues, coworkers, friends, acquaintances—literally all of us—increasingly so because the numbers are multiplying almost epidemic-like across the country. Of course, classifying it as an epidemic is difficult to do because we scarcely understand this disease. We are only beginning to comprehend the cause and modus operandi of this pernicious ailment.

I am joining on these resolutions because of the need to express and call attention to the deadly and insidious spread of Alzheimer's and the Nation's failure to effectively address it. We know that the numbers of people suffering from Alzheimer's are increasing drastically and this resolution rightly calls attention to the dimensions of the problem. But as important as those numbers are, even more so are the numbers of dollars that reflect the Nation's failure to take action that is so desperately needed.

As my colleague from Maine highlighted earlier, we spend \$500 million in research for Alzheimer's compared to \$6 billion for cancer, \$3 billion for HIV, and \$2 billion for cardiovascular efforts. These numbers do not reflect any excess spending on cardiovascular or cancer or other kinds of medical problems for which the National Institutes of Health does such great work, as well as others in the private sector, and philanthropic donations as well. If anything, perhaps we should be considering expanding those efforts. But the numbers do reflect the disproportion and inadequacy of what we as a nation are spending on the research of Alzheimer's. The estimate, according to the National Alzheimer's Project Act and its representatives, is in the neighborhood of \$2 billion a year, as a minimum, that we should be spending to develop diagnoses, cures, and treatment. We should be doubling or tripling funding. Yet even this minimal funding is in danger due to the sequester, which has also jeopardized many other research projects supported by the National Institutes of Health. This abdication of responsibility is a tragedy for us as a generation who will suffer from it in untold numbers, and for the next generation that could be saved from this disease.

I am proud to join in this effort to match the severity of the challenge

with public consciousness and awareness and, even more importantly, public dollars and resources that are vitally important to ensure we conquer and cure as many Alzheimer's patients as we can as quickly as possible. We owe it to ourselves and our children.

There are many ways in life to feel alone. There are many forms of isolation. Even in this body, surrounded by people, Members can be alone at points—alone in championing causes or alone in thought, but there are few conditions that match the aloneness of an Alzheimer's patient. They are often cut off from the world by an inability to communicate, and we must reach out to those patients who cannot let us know and describe, as they might want to do, their aloneness and their resolve.

So for them and all of our loved ones—friends, family, and coworkers—who now and in the future will suffer from the disease, let us resolve to do more through this resolution, and as a nation we will confront this challenge.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, this has been a long process and a difficult one for me to go through. Being the ranking member on the Armed Services Committee, I have had constant contact with both the Democrats and Republicans on this bill. I consider this bill to be the most important bill of the year, and I have said that several times. I have given several speeches up here in the last week. I had about decided with the last offer that was made by our side, which was to come up with 50 amendments, limit it to 50 amendments, the argument there is that would not be 50 votes. If you look at it historically—and I have the numbers going all the way back for the last 15 years—for last year, for example, we had 106 amendments, and only 34 were voice-voted and only 8 were recorded votes. So when we say 50, we are only talking about probably 20. Now, of course, the Democrats would only have 50 also.

So what I have decided I am going to do—because I have to decide what I am going to do with my vote—I am either going to vote for or against cloture on my own bill.

That would be very awkward for me to have to determine. But I have tried to get ahold of Senator PAT TOOMEY, who is kind of the lead person on the steering committee and the one where most of the amendments would come from, most of the objections have come