

America. Although we do know that most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, we don't know what else is in them. Without FDA regulation, we will not.

This Congress Senator BLUMENTHAL of Connecticut joined me in introducing the Tobacco Tax Parity Act, a bill that closes the loopholes in how tobacco products are defined and taxed. It will end the exploitation of these loopholes by tobacco companies. It means taxing the roll-your-own loose tobacco we talked about and pipe tobacco at the same level. It means raising the tax on a container of smokeless tobacco from today's 11 cents to \$1, the same as a pack of cigarettes.

I would like to show this as well. This is a story about Sharon, a 52-year-old woman from my home State of Illinois. Sharon started smoking at the age of 13. She said it seemed as though everybody was doing it. After her first puff, she quickly went from being a casual user to a full-blown addict with an expensive tobacco habit. When Sharon reached the age of 37—she was diagnosed with stage IV throat cancer. Thankfully, radiation and surgery saved her life, but she had to have her voice box removed and now speaks through an electrolarynx.

Last year Sharon was courageous enough to allow her story to be used as part of the Centers for Disease Control's 12-week antismoking campaign, a federally funded national antitobacco campaign with hard-hitting ads. It sounds like a pretty good effort by the government. But compared to the \$10 billion a year the tobacco industry spends on marketing, the CDC campaign spent only \$50 million; the tobacco industry, \$10 billion.

CDC expects the campaign to help 50,000 people quit. One of those who called in to the quit line at CDC was a woman named Kim in Rockford, IL. She was watching an ad which showed the devastating effect on smoking on a North Carolina woman named Terrie. Kim said the commercial scared her, and that her son turned to her and said: Mom, you have just got to quit smoking. Kim called the Illinois tobacco quit line run by the American Lung Association and was connected to the nicotine replacement-patch program.

CDC's anti-smoking campaign is one of the many tobacco control and prevention measures that saves lives and shows we must continue investing in effective tobacco control measures.

This is a tough habit to break. One of my best friends in politics happens to be the President of the United States, who used to be a smoker. He is not now, thank goodness. His family is thankful and we are all thankful. But he still takes a little nicotine gum to chew from time to time to deal with the craving that is there. It is tough. But if people work hard, they can get it done.

This week we commemorate the importance of the first Surgeon General's Report on Smoking and Health and

many other legal and cultural changes in this country. But as we look around at the proliferation of new and dangerous products luring kids to tobacco, we still have a lot of work to do. With the right commitment, we can spare future generations from this deadly epidemic of tobacco use.

I yield the floor.

MAKING FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H.J. Res. 106, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 106) making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 15 minutes of debate equally divided.

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I wish to speak on another matter pending in front of the Senate, the flood insurance bill.

I wish to say that Senator LANDRIEU has been a real champion here. We are still insisting that we be able to bring up the bipartisan bill to delay for several years the flood insurance hikes. In my State, where 40 percent of the policies are, we have seen spikes by tenfold of the rate on the flood insurance policies.

Thank goodness there was in this omnibus appropriations a provision which would provide some partial relief for some homeowners facing huge rate hikes. The estimate is it would only cover less than a quarter of all the flood insurance policies being affected by the huge rate hikes. That is why we need to move forward with passing the broad bipartisan bill which will delay these hikes for several years while FEMA does an affordability study. I told Senator LANDRIEU earlier that I wanted to come in and support her in comments she made earlier today.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, what is the pending business before the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. H.J. Res. 106 is the business pending before the Senate.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Which is?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The short-term CR.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I rise in support. This is a simple short-term extension of the continuing funding resolution we passed some weeks ago. This is Washington-speak and budget-speak for saying, as of today, the money that keeps the Federal Government in operation expires. However, being debated in the House this afternoon we have a consolidated appropria-

tions bill which will fund the government through fiscal year 2014 and will come to the Senate either late this evening or will be on the floor tomorrow morning.

I ask the Senate to pass the short-term extension because it is a technical situation. This isn't the usual delay, drama, and fiscal cliff situation. When the Budget Committee acted, and we passed the bill on a bipartisan, bicameral basis, we, the Appropriations Committee, were given a very stringent deadline of January 15 to produce an appropriations bill for fiscal year 2014. We have worked all the way through the holidays and all the way up to Sunday evening, and we have completed our work. It is now before the Senate and the House to be reviewed. It is on our Web site and so on. We just need a couple of hours to complete the job now.

I can assure my colleagues this very short extension is status quo. It makes no changes in funding levels. It makes no changes in conditions for the operation of the government. The Appropriations Committee worked over the holidays. The agreement was made public on Monday. The House will vote on the agreement this afternoon. As soon as the House completes its work, it will come to the Senate.

This is a short-term CR. It is for 72 hours. It will provide the time needed for the Senate to consider the agreement, for the paperwork to be prepared, and for the President to sign it. This is a very short-term extension which will enable us to complete our work and not even have a temporary shutdown. I urge my colleagues to allow the short extension to pass the Senate expeditiously so we can move on to the diligence we need to provide in debating the appropriations bill.

We will have a vote at 12:15. The vote at 12:15 is on the short-term extension of the current continuing funding resolution. It will be for 72 hours. It takes us through Saturday. I hope we are done before Saturday.

This is not a vote on the appropriations bill itself, nor should it be viewed as a proxy vote. It is just simply a technical time bridge to enable us to have adequate debate in the House and adequate debate and review in the Senate to do this.

I really hope my colleagues support this 72-hour extension so we do not have the usual drama we have of fiscal cliffs and shutdowns and so on. My colleague, the Senator from Alabama Mr. SHELBY, who is my vice chairman, is involved in other duties in the Senate, but he too supports this 72-hour extension. We have been working so diligently on our bill through the holidays so we could have a bill before the Senate, and I must say it has been characterized by diligence, determination, and courtesy. But it takes time. It takes time to review, and it takes time to scrutinize. Quite frankly, it took time to discuss the issues involved in the appropriations.

All 12 subcommittees are represented. But I will say more about it when we bring the actual bill to the floor.

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.

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

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

Ms. MIKULSKI. I ask now for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The joint resolution was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the joint resolution having been read the third time, the question is on passage of the joint resolution.

The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 86, nays 14, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 11 Leg.]

YEAS—86

Alexander	Franken	Mikulski
Ayotte	Gillibrand	Moran
Baldwin	Graham	Murkowski
Baucus	Grassley	Murphy
Begich	Hagan	Murray
Bennet	Harkin	Nelson
Blumenthal	Hatch	Portman
Blunt	Heinrich	Pryor
Booker	Heitkamp	Reed
Boozman	Hirono	Reid
Boxer	Hoeben	Rockefeller
Brown	Isakson	Sanders
Burr	Johanns	Schatz
Cantwell	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Cardin	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Carper	Kaine	Shaheen
Casey	King	Shelby
Chambliss	Kirk	Stabenow
Coats	Klobuchar	Tester
Cochran	Landrieu	Thune
Collins	Leahy	Toomey
Coons	Levin	Udall (CO)
Corker	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Cornyn	Markey	Warner
Donnelly	McCain	Warren
Durbin	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Feinstein	McConnell	Wicker
Fischer	Menendez	Wyden
Flake	Merkley	

NAYS—14

Barrasso	Heller	Roberts
Coburn	Inhofe	Rubio
Crapo	Lee	Scott
Cruz	Paul	Vitter
Enzi	Risch	

The joint resolution (H.J. Res. 106) was passed.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lie on the table was agreed to.

I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2013—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

AMERICAN OPPORTUNITY AGENDA

Mr. SCOTT. Madam President, when I was growing up, my now 93-year-old granddaddy would hold the newspaper and read it while he drank his coffee. Every morning it seemed he was always focused on reading the paper. He looked like an executive, a doctor or an attorney, always making sure his grandsons saw him reading.

I learned several years later that my granddaddy couldn't read, but he was wise enough to model the behavior that he wanted his grandsons to follow. The circumstances of his life forced him out of the classroom at a very young age and into the cotton fields to help support his family. But granddaddy has now lived long enough to see a grandson elected to Congress and another grandson earn the rank of command sergeant major in the U.S. Army. Only 1 percent of NCOs reach that rank.

In a single lifetime, families can go from not having a fair chance to learn to read to seeing their kids graduate from college, as my grandfather has seen two of his grandsons graduate. That is the power of America. That is the power of opportunity.

Over the last several months, I have spent many hours talking and working with people from every walk of life, beginning when I was bagging groceries at the local Piggly Wiggly or waiting tables at the California Dreaming or 2 weeks ago when I took a ride on the public bus just to have an opportunity to sit back and talk with everyday Americans about their hopes, their dreams, and their fears or, last weekend, as I swept floors at the local Moe's restaurant. What I have heard is that people in America and throughout South Carolina are hungry for opportunity. They are working hard, but still they are struggling.

People want to work. They want to get ahead, and they still want a better life for their children and their grandchildren. So the questions for those of us in government are simple: Are we a part of the problem or are we a part of the solution? Do we make things more difficult or are we an ally in this struggle to get ahead? Are we trying the same tactics and getting the same results?

It has been said several times that insanity is doing the same things the same ways and hoping for different results. After a nearly 50-year government-led war on poverty, the poverty rates are increasing. Were this a military conflict, we would have changed our strategy decades ago, but somehow we fail to learn and continue to believe that next year it will be different. It has not been different in nearly half a century.

I propose a new way forward—a new way forward so a little girl can rise

from the depths of poverty and become the CEO of a Fortune 500 company, a new way forward that will create a place where young men raised in a single-parent household and living in the inner city housing projects can become a world-renowned surgeon, a new way forward so an intelligent young lady living in rural South Carolina who ages out of the foster care program can still afford a college education. I propose a new way forward, and our opportunity agenda does just that.

We will help to turn neglected neighborhoods ravished by poverty into centers of excellence. We will see that these amazing centers of excellence will become economic engines because of the creativity of the people living in the neighborhoods. We will see economic activity in a place that we once thought not possible.

Today, too many Americans are trapped in low-paying jobs because they lack the skills to improve their incomes. These folks are not asking for a handout; they are asking for a hand up. Every day Americans are struggling, working hard, looking for a way to change their destiny.

That is why we have introduced the SKILLS Act. With nearly 4 million jobs vacant in America today, we believe the skills gap can be covered because of the SKILLS Act.

Our second bill we have filed is called the CHOICE Act, Creating Hope and Opportunity for Individuals and Communities through Education. One of the opportunities we see within the CHOICE Act is for those kids who have special needs to have the opportunity to make their education dollars portable. I believe every single American deserves the opportunity to realize their full potential, but too many of these young kids—bright kids with special needs—do not receive the education that is best for them. So the CHOICE Act provides their parents with portability so they can choose the school that best fits the needs of their kids.

The American Opportunity Agenda encourages each of us to reach our full potential. In the coming months we will introduce legislation that encourages reform of our welfare programs. We will fight to change our Tax Code so small businesses can hire more people and not simply pay higher taxes. Finally, we will work with anyone, anywhere, at any time to reduce the regulatory burdens that stand in the way and close the doors of opportunity.

Last week we submitted an amendment that restores a 40-hour workweek that was destroyed in ObamaCare. The effort to restore the 40-hour workweek has been led by my colleague, the Senator from Maine SUSAN COLLINS, who understands the devastation caused by ObamaCare, where more than 20 million Americans face the loss of up to 25 percent of their income when they move from 40 hours a week to less than 30 hours a week. I applaud my colleague and others for standing strong