

Fund from the General Fund of the Treasury an amount equal to the amount of the assessments collected under this section, which shall remain available until expended.

What we tried to do in order to maintain the status quo on the Hyde amendment is say that the money which will actually be used to help the victims will now come from the general fund. It will be an amount equal to the fines and penalties that were going to be available under the original bill. But because of the objection, because of the stated concern, we are trying to find a way to get unstuck and keep our focus on these victims and not on some phantom objection based on—again, I am not going to reargue here today; I am just going to say we need to get this done, and this provision does that.

Mr. President, may I ask what the order of business is?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time reserved for the majority under morning business has expired.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for an additional 5 minutes to speak in morning business.

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

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I will wrap up.

As I have told a number of our colleagues across the aisle who believe passionately in the importance of this topic, I think this amendment we will vote on tomorrow addresses their stated concerns. It certainly addresses the concerns stated by the Democratic leader this morning.

I would just say that of all the Senators on the other side of the aisle who agreed to cosponsor this legislation, who previously objected to voting on the bill and passing it—I would ask them to please take a close look at that provision. Again, page 3, lines 3 through 7 of my amendment now would provide that instead of the fines and penalties being directly appropriated into these programs for grant purposes, that money would come from a general fund of the Treasury in an equivalent amount of the fines and penalties. So, money being fungible, there is no loss of funds, but what we have done is we have tried to address their concerns, I think in a way that eliminates them.

All the Senators who cosponsored this legislation, for which I am very grateful—Senator KLOBUCHAR, Senator WYDEN, Senator COONS, Senator UDALL, Senator CASEY, Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator GILLIBRAND, Senator HEITKAMP, Senator SCHUMER, Senator BLUMENTHAL, Senator PETERS, and Senator DURBIN—I hope all of our Democratic friends who previously objected based on the original provision will take a look at this change because it does directly address their stated concerns.

Let's get this done. We will vote on this tomorrow. But I would rather not wait for that time. I would rather try to get this done today if we can. We might be able to do that by agreement if everyone agrees that this provision,

this change, addresses those stated concerns.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I move to close morning business.

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

Morning business is closed.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 2016

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask the Chair to lay before the Senate the message from the House requesting a conference on S. Con. Res. 11, the budget resolution.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the House insist upon its amendment to the resolution (S. Con. Res. 11) entitled "Concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025," and ask a conference with the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon.

Ordered, That Mr. Tom Price of Georgia, Mr. Rokita, Mr. Diaz-Balart, Mrs. Black, Mr. Moolenaar, Mr. Van Hollen, Mr. Yarmuth, and Ms. Moore be the managers of the conference on the part of the House.

Mr. ENZI. I move to disagree in the House amendment, agree to the request by the House for a conference, and authorize the Presiding Officer to appoint conferees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is pending.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to make some comments about the budget and the process.

Last month, the Senate Budget Committee took an important first step in helping to change the way we do business in Washington by reporting out a balanced budget. This is crucial as we begin to restore the trust of the American people.

This week, we will take the next step and start to work on a joint balanced budget resolution with our colleagues in the House that will expand America's economy and increase opportunities for hard-working families. A balanced budget approved by Congress will help make the government live within its means and set spending limits for our Nation. A balanced budget will also boost the Nation's economic output by more than \$500 billion over the next 10 years. That is according to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office.

Why the urgency? Hard-working families are fed up with the President's spend-now-pay-later policy and are closely following our efforts to produce a balanced budget. Senate Democrats could only muster two budgets in 8 years, and we will soon have one after only 4 months. It is time to show taxpayers that Congress is committed to a balanced budget to make our government more effective and accountable, but we are running out of time.

Recent media reports note that the lawmakers in 27 States have passed applications for a constitutional convention to approve a balanced budget amendment. I have to add that there are new applications to do that same amendment in nine other States, and they are close behind.

Now, if just seven of those nine States approve moving forward on the balanced budget issue, it would bring the number of applications to 34 States. This would mean the two-thirds requirement under Article V of the Constitution would force Congress to take action. It is no wonder hard-working taxpayers across the country are feeling anxious.

Federal revenues have hit record highs. Yet we are on track to overspend by nearly \$1 trillion a year. I think we are at the \$560 billion level of overspending this year.

How much does Congress get to make decisions on? Congress spends about \$4 trillion a year, but only gets to make decisions on \$1½ trillion. Now, if we overspend by over \$500 billion, we are spending half more than what we take in. No family can exist very long by spending half more than they take in year after year after year.

We looked at the President's budget and the President increases taxes by \$2½ trillion and still gets a wider and wider gap of overspending as time goes by to that trillion-dollar mark out there in 10 years.

Just this week, headlines around the country reported: "Budget Deficit in U.S. Widens as Spending Exceeds Record Revenue."

On Monday, the Treasury Department reported that spending by the Federal Government exceeded its revenue by more than \$439 billion from October through March, which is \$26 billion more compared to the same period last year. In fact, CBO is forecasting that for March our Nation spent more than \$44 billion, up 19 percent from last year. We are getting more money, and we are spending more money.

American taxpayers understand we overspend. The more we overspend, the more debt we owe, and the more debt our children and grandchildren will owe. In fact, we have done this so consistently that it is not just our grandchildren and our children who are faced with the crisis, it is us as well—everybody in America.

I mentioned that we get to make decisions on \$1½ trillion dollars a year, which is \$1,100 billion. If anybody knows how big \$1 billion is, they know

how big \$1,100 billion is. But that is all we get to make decisions on.

The amount of interest we paid last year was \$235 billion. Interest doesn't buy you a thing, but we spent \$235 billion on interest. Now, that is pretty close to 1 percent for the fee for that borrowing. So if \$235 billion is 1 percent interest, what would the normal 5 percent cost? Every single dime we get to make a decision on. That means no defense, no education, no HELP. Everything will be by the wayside just so we can pay the interest on our debt. That is why we have to be concerned about the overspending that is happening.

American taxpayers understand that the more we overspend, the more debt we owe and the more debt our children and grandchildren owe. If that tax rate goes up, we will soon be responsible for paying off that debt at the expense of everything else America expects. This is why Republicans in Congress are focused on passing a balanced budget that will ensure that Washington will once again live within its means, just like hard-working families do every day.

Now, we don't get that balance for 10 years, but it moves toward that goal every year. Ten years is too long. For next year's budget, we are going to have to figure out better things to do to get it back into a framework where our interest will not exceed our expenditures. That is the interest exceeding the expenditures, not the revenue, and again we had a record revenue. That is why we are focused on passing a balanced budget, just like hard-working families do every day.

What does the Senate-passed budget do? Well, here is what it does: It balances the budget in 10 years with no tax hikes. It protects our most vulnerable citizens. It strengthens the national defense. It improves job growth and opportunity for hard-working families. It slows the rate of spending growth.

Now, it doesn't recede the spending growth, it slows the spending growth. That is the best we have ever been able to do in Washington. When we talk about a cut in Washington, what we are talking about is giving them less than what they asked for, not less than what they have.

It preserves Social Security by reducing spending in other areas to fully offset Social Security's rising deficit and encourages our Nation's leaders to begin a bipartisan, bicameral discussion on how to protect Social Security and avoid the across-the-board Social Security benefit cuts that will occur later under the law unless we take action, but that is something that has to be done jointly. There would be too much blame otherwise, and as far as the budget, the reason we have to preserve Social Security by reducing spending in other areas to offset Social Security is because we are not allowed to do anything with Social Security in the budget.

This budget will also protect our seniors by safeguarding Medicare from in-

solveny and extending the life of the Medicare trust fund by 5 years. It ensures Medicare savings in the President's health care law and makes sure those savings are dedicated to Medicare. If it comes from Medicare, it ought to go back to Medicare instead of seeing it go to more overspending on new programs that are outside of Medicare.

Our balanced budget continues funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program and creates a new program based on CHIP to serve low-income, working-age, able-bodied adults and children who are eligible for Medicaid.

It increases State flexibility in designing benefits and administering Medicaid Programs to encourage efficiency and reduce wasteful spending, and it provides stable and predictable funding so long-term services and support are sustainable both for the Federal Government and the States.

As the Senate and House begin budget negotiations next week, it is worth noting that the strong economic growth a balanced budget can provide will serve as the foundation for helping all Americans grow and prosper.

One of the goals of a Republican balanced budget is to make our government more efficient, more effective, and more accountable. If Congress does its job, we can have some flexibility and eliminate what is not working, starting with the worst first, and then we can eliminate and streamline what is left.

The reason I emphasized "the worst first" is because one of the things we talk about constantly is the need to prevent the sequester. In some cases, it is absolutely essential to prevent a sequester, but the sequester should have been done in the efficient way of eliminating the worst first. Instead, there was a memo that went out that said: Make it hurt. That should never happen in America. That is why we saw some of the decisions that came down that seemed pretty ridiculous.

One of the decisions that affected Wyoming was—I hope everybody will come and see the Grand Tetons—marvelous mountains that look like part of the Alps were transplanted over there and made a little bit taller. A lot of people like to stop and take pictures there regardless of the season—whether it is snow covered or the aspens are golden in the foreground or whether everything is lush and green, and, of course, you see wildlife all through that valley. Naturally, people like to stop and take pictures.

Well, a bunch of signs were printed up that said you cannot use the turnouts. A bunch of barricades were bought so you could not pull onto the turnout, and the sign said it would be illegal to park along the highway.

Where did the money come from for the barricades? Where did the money come for the signs that said we could not use the parking lots to take pictures? Well, I called to find out whose brilliant idea that was and why park-

ing lots would be closed, and I was told that there would not be any garbage pickup. I suggested they just remove the garbage cans.

When people in Wyoming and across the Nation visit a national park, they can haul their garbage another 20 miles before they throw it out. That way the beautiful vista could still be photographed instead of people still parking along the highways to take those pictures and then getting ticketed. That is just one small example of cutting the most important first instead of the worst first. I am sure there are examples in every State.

It didn't just happen with facilities like that. The people at Head Start came to see me and said they got a 7.5 percent cut in the sequester. It was supposed to be 2.3 percent.

How did it get to 7.5 percent? After checking into it, it appears the Washington bureaucracy decided to keep more than their share of the money instead giving it to the kids across America who were supposed to have it. It did get restored, but the discouraging part was that when I asked the people who talked to me before how things were going, they said: Well, we got the extra money, but in order to meet the employer requirements in Wyoming for ObamaCare, we had to spend all of that money, so none of the kids happened to go back to Head Start. That was very disappointing. That is not the way to run a government and it is not the way to run a business. It should never have happened.

We need a budget that can eliminate waste and streamline what is left and start with the worst first.

Of course, another of my suggestions is that we have a biannual budget. Mr. President, \$1,100 billion is too much money to look at in 1 year. Twelve bills to allocate that money to the different agencies are too many bills for us to handle in 1 year, particularly if they are going to get scrutiny.

I suggested we write the number of bills that we do and separate them into two packages of six and that we do the six tough ones right after the election, because we have a little more appetite for doing them then, and the six easy ones just before an election. Then we would be able to get all 12 of them and be able to scrutinize all 12 of them.

Why is that important? Well, in going through this budget process—and like I said, I only had about 8 weeks to start to put the budget together—one of the things I discovered was that we have a whole bunch of programs that are out of authorization. The ability to spend for them has expired, but that doesn't stop us from spending on them. It should at least constrain us a little bit.

Some of those programs go back to 1983. They expired in 1983, 1987, and on up to the present day. How many of them? Two hundred and sixty programs. There were 260 programs that we haven't looked at to see if we ought to continue to spend money on them or

if we ought to revise how we have been spending the money. If they have expired—most of them had been in existence for 6 years before they expired, and in those 6 years, we should have been able to find if there were any flaws or changes. Hopefully, there was somebody who was looking out for it and found some efficiencies that helped with the spending.

So there were 260 programs. Do we know how much that amounts to that we are still spending and there is no authority to spend? It is \$293 billion a year. That is a year. Usually, when we talk about the budget we are talking about over 10 years. So that would only be \$29 billion a year if it were over 10 years, but it is not. It is \$293 billion a year of expired authorizations, expired permissions to spend money. We have to get that corrected as well.

One of the ways we can do that is through a biennial budget, so that we are looking at half of them in a year instead of everything the government does every year. The dollars have gotten so big that we can't get through them efficiently, effectively, and scrutinizing them as good accounting in a year.

There is one exception on that, which is that we look at defense every year. Defense is the most important constitutional requirement given to this body. So we would continue to do that each year. Incidentally, defense is the one authorization that is not out of authorization, and that is because we do it every year. I don't know how many decades we have done the authorization—the permission for spending—for defense.

Another troubling situation I discovered through this process was that there are some items that are not authorized that were in defense that we are spending money on anyway. I get comments from the people on the committee that looks over defense saying: How can they spend that money when we just did an authorization that said no, that is not one of the authorized items? So there are some problems we need to definitely work on with budgets. That is what we have done while putting this budget together, in trying to eliminate some of the inconsistencies we have, but we have not touched that \$293 billion in unauthorized spending.

So when people say we need more money for the nondefense items, I want them to take a look at that \$293 billion and see if they can't find \$29 billion, \$90 billion, whatever, out of \$293 billion that they think might be more effectively spent in a different way.

I know when I came to Congress there were 119 preschool children's programs. Everybody has ideas for preschool programs, and they are good ideas. We know that if we teach kids better before they go to school, they do better in school, there are fewer dropouts, there is less crime, and the whole world is better.

There were 119 programs. Senator Kennedy and I worked on that, and we

got it down to 69 programs. The ones we got rid of are the ones that were under our jurisdiction. So that left a whole bunch more. In the meantime, I have been able to work that down to 35 programs. And in the child care grant program last year, I got an amendment passed—it was one of 14 amendments that we considered—which required that those 35 go down to just 5 and that all 5 be put under 1 department. I am hoping that is what the administration is doing. That would save enough money to fund the truly preschool education programs really well, and that is what we need to do. There is a lot of money right there.

So if Congress does its job, we can have some flexibility and eliminate what isn't working, starting with the worst first, and then we can eliminate waste and streamline what is left. But to do this, first, Congress must do what it has not done in the past 8 years. It has to scrutinize every dollar for which they have a responsibility. If government programs are not delivering results, they should be improved, and if they are not needed, they should be eliminated. It is time to prioritize and demand results from our government programs. When these programs are reauthorized, I am hoping there is a matrix in there that says this is what we plan to do and this is how we will know if we got it done. Then we will have an easy evaluation of whether they are getting their job done. That is mostly what happens in the private sector, and it is an efficient way of doing it in the public sector as well.

I have made enough speeches about efficiency in government that I had someone come up to me and say: I hate to say this, but the job I am doing isn't worth having anybody do. He said: I am reluctant to mention it because if they eliminate that job, I am probably fired. Well, I took his suggestion, and I spoke to the right people and that job got eliminated, and he got promoted. That is what has to happen. We have to take the people who are innovative in government, who are figuring out ways to do things better and more efficiently and more effectively and move them into the positions where they can really do the job.

So that is what I am counting on. In the coming weeks, hard-working taxpayers will get to see something they have not had the chance to experience in the last 8 years, and that is an open and transparent legislative process. We are starting that process today with the appointment of the conferees for the conference committees, and we will have amendments this afternoon. Members of Congress from both the House and the Senate will come together as part of the Senate-House budget committee to create a balanced budget that will boost our Nation's economic output and help restore the promise of a government that is more effective and that will put more people to work.

A balanced budget will allow Americans to spend more time working hard

to grow their businesses or to advance their jobs, instead of worrying about taxes and inefficient and ineffective regulations. Most importantly, it means every American who wants to find a good-paying job and a fulfilling career has the opportunity to do just that.

I look forward to joining my colleagues in both the Senate and the House—Republicans and Democrats—as we take this next step to deliver a government that is more accountable to each and every American.

I yield the floor and reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, let me applaud Senator ENZI and his staff for their very hard work.

I certainly agree with Senator ENZI that we need a government that is accountable, that we need to get rid of waste in government, and that we need to get rid of duplicative programs. I don't think there is any debate on that. I look forward to working with Senator ENZI and others to make that happen. However, the Republican budget is far, far more than that.

Today, I rise in strong opposition to the motion to go to conference on the budget resolution.

The budget resolution the Senate passed on March 27 moves this country in exactly the wrong direction, and the House budget resolution, in many respects, is even worse. The Federal budget is more than just a long list of numbers, although God knows there is a long list of numbers in the budget. The Federal budget is about our national priorities and about our values. It is about how we assess the problems facing our country, of which there are many—and I am not sure Senator ENZI would disagree with me if I laid it out—and how we go forward in addressing the problems on which there is a fundamental divide. That is what the Senate is now dealing with. What are the problems facing our country and how do we move forward?

Let me begin by saying that despite the modest gains of the Affordable Care Act, there remain in this country 35 million Americans who have no health insurance. That means that when they get sick, they may not be able to go to the doctor or they may end up going to the emergency room at very high cost.

I have spoken with doctors all over this country who tell me that when people don't have health insurance, because they delay going to the doctor, sometimes by the time they go into the doctor's office, it is too late. The doctor says: Why didn't you come in here 6 months ago when you noticed your symptoms? And they say: I don't have any health insurance; I couldn't afford it. So we are losing tens of thousands of people every single year who die—die—or become much sicker than they should be because they don't have health insurance.

The United States remains the only major country on Earth that doesn't

guarantee health care to all people. Thirty-five million Americans have no health insurance. What is the Republican solution to this problem? Well, it is a brilliant idea. They are going to end the Affordable Care Act and make \$440 billion worth of cuts to Medicaid, which will result in 27 million Americans losing their health insurance on top of the 35 million we already have uninsured.

I know the newspapers are not particularly interested in it. We won't see it on network TV. That is the reality. They don't deny it. There are 16 million people covered by the Affordable Care Act who would lose their health insurance because this bill ends it. Then, a \$440 billion cut to Medicaid, and another 11 million gone. Sixteen plus 11 is 27 million Americans. What is the idea? What happens to those people? How many of them die? How many of them suffer? It is not an issue for them. They are working on something. They have been working on something for about 15 years for health care. If it hasn't happened in 16 years, it isn't going to happen.

That is what is in this budget.

This budget denies over 2.3 million young adults the right to stay on their parents' health insurance plan until the age of 26. We used to have this absurd situation. My wife and I have health insurance to cover our kids, but when they turn 18, they are not on our plan. It is gone. Right now, young people are on the plan until they are 26. It is gone under this Republican budget.

We finally overcame a situation that is so vulgar it is hard to imagine that it existed in America, and that is that people who have serious illnesses such as cancer, heart disease or diabetes would walk into an insurance office and say: I need insurance. The insurance company would say: Oh, we can't cover you for your diabetes, your heart disease, your cancer because it is a pre-existing condition and we don't want to pay out all of that money if it recurs.

Think about that, how crazy that is. What do people want insurance for? They want insurance to cover their needs. If I had breast cancer or colon cancer 5 years ago, sure, I want to make sure my insurance company covers that. It is a preexisting condition. Under the Affordable Care Act, we did away with that discrimination. That would come back. So all Americans who have serious health illnesses: Know that if what they put into this budget goes into effect, insurance companies can reject you.

Not only has this Republican budget ended the Affordable Care Act and made \$440 billion in cuts to Medicaid, it would also increase prescription drug prices for 4 million seniors and persons with disabilities who are on Medicare Part D by reopening the doughnut hole. That means that at a time when senior poverty is increasing and so many seniors in Vermont—I speak to them all the time and I suspect it is

the same in Wyoming or maybe not—are saying: I am living on \$13,000, \$14,000 a year; I have to heat my home in the winter—if you live in Vermont, you do—I have to buy food; I have to pay for medicine; I can't do it all. So we closed the so-called doughnut hole, which means that seniors would not have to pay out-of-pocket for their prescription drugs. The Republican budget reopens the hole. All over this country, seniors will be paying more for their prescription drugs.

The Republican budget not only undertakes a vast attack on health care in this country, which will decimate life for millions of people, but then on another issue of great consequence, education, it is equally bad.

A couple of months ago in my State of Vermont I held three townhall meetings at colleges and universities in the State to talk to young people about the cost of college and about student debt. In Vermont—and I suspect in the other 49 States as well—we have families who are struggling to afford to send their kids to college, and then we have others who are leaving college terribly deep in debt. Just yesterday, I was flying here from Burlington, VT, and I sat next to a woman who said her six kids went to college and graduate school, and all of them are deeply in debt.

So clearly, what a sensible budget does is two things. It says, first, how do we make college affordable so that young people will be able to get a higher education; and second of all, when they graduate, how do we lower student debt, which is today so oppressive?

The Republican budget does exactly the opposite. What the Republican budget does is cut \$90 billion over 10 years in Pell grants. Pell grants are the major Federal program making it possible for low-income and working-class families to get grants to go to college. This would increase the cost of college education to more than 8 million Americans. Think about it. Our job is to lower the cost of college; this budget increases it.

At a time when working-class families in Vermont and all over this country are having a hard time finding good quality, affordable preschool childcare, the Republican budget makes significant cuts in Head Start which means that 110,000 fewer children would be able to enroll in that program. Under the Republican budget, 1.9 million fewer students would receive the academic health they need to succeed in school by cutting about \$12 billion in cuts to the title I education program. Dropout rates in low-income communities all over this country for high school kids are atrocious. The Republican budget cuts significantly the funding that we put into public schools in low-income communities.

At a time when the middle class is disappearing and we have more people living in poverty today than at almost any time in modern American history,

today there are millions of families who are struggling to put food on the table. I know maybe on Capitol Hill people don't know that, but that is a reality. People are making 9 or 10 bucks an hour. They have a few kids. They are having a very difficult time affording food—basic nutrition. We have an estimated 40 million people that are what they call “food insecure.” That means people who on any given week, any given month, depending on what is happening, have a hard time feeding their families. The Republican budget would make massive cuts in nutrition programs in this country by, among other things, cutting \$10 billion to the Women, Infants and Children Program over the next decade.

I honestly have a hard time hearing people talk about family values and how much they love families and children, and you have a program which has done a really good job in terms of prenatal care for pregnant woman, making sure they get the health care and the nutrition they need, making sure their babies get the care they need. Who really thinks we should cut these programs? What kind of Nation are we or what kind of Senate are we that people would vote to cut these programs—not to mention massive cuts in the food stamp program.

But in the midst of all of these devastating cuts in health care, education, and nutrition that impacts working families, the Republican budget does something else which is quite incredible. And I suspect that people who are listening are saying: BERNIE SANDERS is being partisan; he is not telling the truth; it really can't be this bad. One of the problems we have is convincing people this is reality. This is reality. This is the Republican budget. I know the media doesn't write about it much, but that is what it is. In addition to making cuts to health care, nutrition, education, other programs, what else do they do?

At a time when the wealthiest 400 Americans—400 Americans—paid a tax rate of 16.7 percent in 2012, at a time when hedge fund managers pay a lower effective tax rate than working families, truckdrivers, and nurses, what the Republican budget does based on an amendment they did abolishes the estate tax. The estate tax provides a \$269 billion tax break. For whom? For the middle class? Good. Low-income people? That is great. Not so. This repeal of the estate tax applies to the wealthiest—not 1 percent, but the top two-tenths of 1 percent. Republicans passed a tax proposal which impacts the top two-tenths of 1 percent and leaves nothing for 99.8 percent of Americans. Cut education, cut health care, cut nutrition, and give the tax breaks to billionaires. By repealing the estate tax, the average tax breaks for multimillionaires and billionaires would be about \$3 million.

When you go around Vermont and you go around America, do people say: Hey, what we really need, what our

major priority is, is not to feed the hungry, not to make college affordable, not to create jobs, but to give a tax break to billionaires? That is in their budget.

Not only do they give a huge tax break to the wealthy—what else do they do? They raise taxes on low-income and working families—folks who do not make a whole lot of campaign contributions. What the Republican budget does is increase taxes by not extending the benefits we put into the earned income tax credit and the child tax credit. It allows those additional benefits to expire, which means that low-income and moderate-income families will pay more in taxes.

In fact, we estimate that tax hike for low-income and middle-income families will be about \$900 apiece for more than 13 million families. Raise taxes to low- and moderate-income families and lower taxes for billionaires. Anybody believe those are the priorities that should be in a budget for the American people?

I will have more to say about this budget later. But the Republican budget does not address the significant problems facing America: how we create the millions of jobs we need, how we raise the minimum wage to a living wage, how we address pay equity so women workers don't make 78 cents on the dollar compared to men, how we rebuild our crumbling infrastructure. It doesn't address any of those issues. But what it does is make a bad situation worse. I would hope that my colleagues would have the courage to stand up to Wall Street, to stand up to the big money interests, and start defending the working families of this country and vote no on this resolution.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, as part of this discussion, I want to mention something that was very significant that happened last night. It happened after the press went to bed, I think, but a very important thing, and that is a thing called the doc fix passed. The SGR passed this body last night in a very bipartisan way, after a series of amendments that were open floor amendments. That is what is supposed to happen around here.

One of the reasons I mention that is, I have always said if you can't see a doctor, you don't have insurance at all. With the way we have been setting up Medicare payments for doctors, we have been driving them out of the profession. We have been eliminating doctors. We have been having doctors tell their kids don't become a doctor, because of what Congress is doing, holding them hostage every 6 months. That got taken care of last night.

I don't know, we have been doing that for, I think, about 18 years, just 1 fix at a time. So it is nice that we are finally able to make that permanent.

I mentioned that was Medicare. This is the first budget the Republicans have gotten to participate in in many years, but the Democrats got to work on the health care bill, and that was part of their budget. In fact, it was part of the reconciliation in the budget, which is a special way of passing something without 60 votes. In that budget they took \$714 billion from Medicare, and they didn't put it into Medicare. There were just some comments about how the budget I worked on has a little over \$400 million of Medicare savings. That Medicare savings is what the President suggested should be done in Medicare savings, and we put that Medicare savings back into Medicare. That is the only way you can save the fund.

So we have taken into consideration a lot of these issues. The cost of college—I have been through numerous hearings in the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. I used to be chairman of the committee and I have been ranking member of the committee, and I expired my time as ranking member on that committee, but we did a lot of hearings on the cost of college. Probably the biggest suggestion I can have for people living in the East is send your kids West.

I was checking to see why more people couldn't get into community college on the east coast. I am not talking about the big colleges, which also have a very big problem on the number of students they can take and are very selective in what they take, but I found out that most of the community colleges were filled out here. Consequently, some for-profit colleges were able to charge considerably more than community college and we looked into ways to eliminate that practice. Of course, the way it got eliminated, if you did that to the public colleges as well, we would put them out of business. But I would mention that it is less expensive for an out-of-State student to go to the University of Wyoming or one of our community colleges than it is to get in-State tuition in most of the places in the United States.

There was a mention of estate tax. That is a recommendation that was put in as a deficit-neutral measure. I am not sure where the raising the taxes on the poor comes from, except for the comment that the extensions that we do annually on that weren't in there. There is a good reason why those aren't in there. We have provided a reconciliation instruction that would allow for tax reform, although the chairman of the committee said we are going to do that in a bipartisan way.

We are going to have tax reform that will take care of fairness and simplicity and accountability in our tax system. This is a particularly important time to talk about that. Today is tax day, and I hope everybody in America has or will file their taxes today. I know there has been some difficulty getting through on the lines to be able

to talk to the IRS about tax problems, and I want to chastise the IRS a little bit for that. They are trying to show they need more money, instead of allocating personnel to where they are really needed. If they answer more questions right now, they don't have as many things they have to do later, and they will collect more money than if they don't answer those questions. The proper committee needs to take a look at whether they have adequate revenue to do their job, but again, there are inefficiencies there. They are talking about needing more money because when they audit, they are able to get \$4 to \$6 for every dollar they spend. They should be embarrassed. Public auditors in a company expect to get \$15 to \$20 per dollar that they audit. They have got to come up with a better selection procedure for who needs to be audited, and go after the big bucks. There are a number of things the IRS ought to do.

When I first came to Washington, I tried to talk to different agencies about inefficiencies they had. I was a freshman, so I had a lot of time to do some of those things. One of the agencies I wanted to look at as an accountant was the IRS. As a result of some of my meetings at the IRS, we had some hearings here about being taxpayer friendly. People might recall that the people who served as witnesses in the past had to be voice-modulated behind screens. That should not happen in America. We should have a tax system that people can comply with without the gestapo kinds of tactics that are sometimes used.

So we need to do something to make our tax system more efficient, more accountable, and fairer. I am convinced that Senator HATCH and Senator WYDEN, the chairman and the ranking member of the committee, are going to do some things on taxes, and I think the American people will like it. They are past due. They can end those complications and get more accountability, which will make the IRS's job a lot easier and also make it better for hard-working taxpayers in America.

So there are a lot of things a budget can do. I am hoping we will do them.

I yield the floor and reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, let me just pick up on a couple of the points my friend from Wyoming, Senator ENZI, made. The Republicans often say, and Senator ENZI said it now, that Democrats cut \$714 billion from Medicare. To the best of my knowledge, not one penny involved in those cuts cut any benefits to the American people.

What the Affordable Care Act attempted to do—and maybe we made some progress, as Senator ENZI pointed out, last night with the so-called doc fix—is to make Medicare more efficient. What is wrong with that? What is wrong with saving money? What the American people want us to do is make

programs more efficient. In fact, Senator ENZI was talking about that a moment ago. He is right. But the idea, the implication, that those cuts resulted in benefit cuts is not accurate.

Furthermore, what some of that money—those savings—went to is filling, plugging the doughnut hole so that seniors would not have to pay money out of their own pockets for prescription drugs.

So if you could save money in a bureaucracy—and God knows the U.S. health care system is the most wasteful and bureaucratic of any in the world—if we can make the system more efficient, save money, put that money into helping seniors afford prescription drugs, what is the problem with that? I do not think so.

Senator ENZI talked about the IRS and people having difficulty making connections, which is clearly not right. He is right. He also mentioned, quite correctly, that for every dollar we invest in various parts of the IRS which do audits, we can make—what was that, \$4 to \$6? I think that is a pretty good investment. Most business people would say: All right, I can get \$4 to \$6 for every dollar that I invest. Let's do it.

I look forward to working with Senator ENZI and other Republicans to, in fact, do just that. We can argue about the Tax Code, and we will. But I think we don't argue that when people owe it, they should pay it. Right. We should change it if we do not like it.

So if we can invest a dollar into the IRS and get \$6 to \$4 back, I think that is a pretty good investment. Senator ENZI was right in saying that last night we passed a pretty good piece of legislation. Not perfect by any means. I had some serious concerns about it. I voted for it. One of the reasons I voted for it is it extended for another 2 years a program that I worked very hard on—that is, the Federally Qualified Community Health Center Program which is playing a huge role in providing health care and dental care and low-cost prescriptions drugs and mental health counseling to many millions of Americans in all of our 50 States. We got a significant increase. I fought very hard for a significant increase in that program as part of the Affordable Care Act that was going to expire.

As a result of yesterday's legislation, in addition to the doc fix, we have extended—and I see Senator BLUNT here, who has been active in that as well—we were able to extend for another 2 years funding for the Community Health Center Program, something that I think was important.

Senator ENZI was right. I think that is a step forward. But that should not be confused with the budget. The Republican budget is an unmitigated disaster—tax breaks for billionaires, cuts in programs that Americans desperately need, raising taxes for low-income working families.

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

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

The Senator has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has been yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to disagree in the House amendment, agree to the request by the House for a conference, and authorize the Presiding Officer to appoint conferees.

Mr. TESTER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 54, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 145 Leg.]

YEAS—54

Alexander	Ernst	McConnell
Ayotte	Fischer	Moran
Barrasso	Flake	Murkowski
Blunt	Gardner	Perdue
Boozman	Graham	Portman
Burr	Grassley	Risch
Capito	Hatch	Roberts
Cassidy	Heller	Rounds
Coats	Hoeven	Rubio
Cochran	Inhofe	Sasse
Collins	Isakson	Scott
Coons	Johnson	Sessions
Corker	Kaine	Sullivan
Cornyn	King	Thune
Cotton	Kirk	Tillis
Crapo	Lankford	Toomey
Daines	Lee	Warner
Enzi	McCain	Wicker

NAYS—43

Baldwin	Heinrich	Peters
Bennet	Heitkamp	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reid
Booker	Klobuchar	Sanders
Boxer	Leahy	Schatz
Brown	Manchin	Schumer
Cantwell	Markey	Shaheen
Cardin	McCaskill	Stabenow
Carper	Menendez	Tester
Casey	Merkley	Udall
Donnelly	Mikulski	Warren
Durbin	Murphy	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murray	Wyden
Franken	Nelson	
Gillibrand	Paul	

NOT VOTING—3

Cruz	Shelby	Vitter
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The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes.

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

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S DEATH

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, today we honor the 150th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's death. We all know the tragic story: On the evening of April 14, 1865, the 4-year anniversary of the beginning of the Civil War and just days after its end at Appomattox, President Lincoln was shot while attending the theater. The next morning, his last, labored breathing ceased.

His fanatically unreconciled assassin was enraged by Lincoln's achievements: his saving of the Union; his emancipation of the slaves; his forecast that the freed slaves would soon be voting; his rededication of the Nation to the Declaration and to the Constitution in which it is embodied. Lincoln lived for these things, and he also died for them.

Days earlier Lincoln's assassin, in attendance at the second inaugural, had ignored the reelected President's eloquent plea "to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds," doing so "with malice toward none, with charity for all."

A year-and-a-half earlier, dedicating the cemetery at Gettysburg, Lincoln had said that "history would little note nor long remember" what he said. Here he was wrong—or at least falsely modest—for the Gettysburg Address is among the most beautiful and memorable speeches in history. He called upon us to "be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us," and "that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth."

His words call upon us still to take "increased devotion" from those at Gettysburg and every war since who gave "the last full measure of devotion." Soon he would be among those honored dead, the final and most poignant casualty in the same war, and his death is another reason for us to renew our devotion to our great country.

We should think, then, about Lincoln's message, which is like the message of our Nation. On the question of equality, Lincoln was as precise as a mathematician and as lyrical as a poet.

Of equality and slavery, he said:

As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is no democracy.

Of equality and the Declaration, Lincoln said:

I think the authors of that notable instrument intended to include all men, but they did not intend to declare all men equal in all respects. They did not mean to say that we are all equal in color, size, intellect, moral developments, or social capacity. They defined with tolerable distinctness, in what respects they did consider all men created equal—equal in "certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." This they said, and this they meant.

Now put these propositions together. We are unequal in most respects, but

we are equal in our rights. We own ourselves, and no one else may own us. We own the government, and the government does not own us. We are entitled to our lives with the talents that God gave us. Any form of government that interferes with these rights is wrong.

But in the world today are rogue nations that are growing in strength and violate these principles. They constitute a menace to our freedom and to civilization itself.

At home, our government grows ever greater in its size, in its reach, and in its expense. The law is flouted increasingly by high authority. And our people say with increasing intensity that they mistrust and even fear their government. It may be for the people, but it is less and less "of and by" the people.

On this 150th anniversary of Lincoln's death, let us be here reminded and dedicated to that cause for which Lincoln himself gave the last full measure of devotion. Let us dedicate ourselves, in Lincoln's words, "to finish the work we are in," so that we "may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:44 p.m., recessed until 2 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. FLAKE).

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 2016—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

If no one yields time, the time will be charged equally.

The Senator from Vermont.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I send to the desk my motion to instruct conferees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a deficit-neutral reserve fund for legislation related to retirement benefits, which may not include legislation cutting benefits under the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program established under title II of the Social Security Act, increasing the retirement age, or privatizing the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, as I mentioned earlier, I happen to believe the Republican budget we will be discussing today moves us in exactly the wrong direction. At a time when the

middle class is in decline and the gap between the very rich and everybody else is growing wider, what the Republican budget does is make ferocious attacks on programs desperately depended upon by working families while at the same time providing outrageous tax breaks to the very wealthiest of the wealthy. That makes no sense to me at all.

One area where the Republican budget is negligent—one of many areas where the Republican budget is negligent—is in the issue of Social Security. Social Security is perhaps the most important and successful Federal program that was ever initiated. It is life and death to millions of seniors and people with disabilities in this country, and it has a history of enormous success. Before Social Security was established, about half of the seniors in this country lived in poverty. Today, while too high, that number is somewhere around 10 percent.

Unfortunately, in recent years what we have seen is an increase in senior poverty. We have seen many seniors struggling to pay their bills, to heat their homes, and to buy the medicine they need. It seems to me that in this moment, not only should we not be talking about cutting Social Security, as many of our Republican colleagues are, we should be talking about expanding Social Security benefits. I have introduced legislation to do just that. But today I rise to bring forth legislation—bring forth a motion to instruct the budget conferees to include a deficit-neutral reserve fund to protect retirement benefits by not cutting Social Security benefits, by not raising the retirement age, and by not privatizing Social Security. So in essence, what this motion to instruct says is that we go on record as Members of the U.S. Senate that we will not cut Social Security benefits, that we will not raise the retirement age, and that we will not privatize Social Security.

At a time of massive wealth and income inequality, when 99 percent of all of the new income generated in this country is going to the top 1 percent and when over half of the American people have less than \$10,000 in savings, the last thing any Member of the Senate should be thinking about is cutting Social Security. Today, the average Social Security benefit is just \$1,328 a month—not a lot of money.

Now, 20 percent of senior citizens are living on an average income of just \$7,600 a year. Frankly, I don't know how anybody lives on an income of \$7,600 a year. I don't know how you buy food. I don't know how you buy the medicine you need, how you take care of your basic needs. But that is the reality. More than one-third of our senior citizens rely on Social Security for virtually all of their income. In other words, Social Security for them—more than a third—is not just a small part of their total income, it is virtually all of their income. Two-thirds of American

seniors depend on Social Security for more than half of their income.

The reality is, despite some of the rhetoric we hear around here or see on TV, we do not have a Social Security crisis. America has a retirement crisis. Given this reality, our job is to expand Social Security benefits, not cut them.

I have been distressed that in three out of the four major Budget Committee hearings held this year, Republicans invited witnesses who testified in support of cutting Social Security. John Engler, the head of the Business Roundtable, representing the CEOs of some of the largest corporations and Wall Street banks in this country, was one of the Republican witnesses. Mr. Engler and the Business Roundtable are the leaders of corporate America. These are the guys who make millions of dollars a year in salary. These are the guys who have huge retirement benefits. They are asking Congress to cut Social Security COLAs for senior citizens and disabled veterans and to raise the retirement age to 70 years of age.

Imagine that. People who are multimillionaires and have huge retirement benefits are coming to Capitol Hill and telling Members of Congress to cut Social Security. It turns out, in fact, that the CEOs of the Business Roundtable have retirement benefits of their own of some \$88,000 a month. So we have the heads of large corporations who have retirement benefits of \$88,000 a month—\$1 million a year—and they are telling the Congress to cut benefits for people who are trying to survive on \$14,000 a year. That is an outrage.

I am getting a little bit tired of being lectured by CEOs of large corporations who want to cut the Social Security benefits of elderly people. That is wrong.

I am also tired of hearing folks on TV say that Social Security is going broke. Well, the truth is Social Security is not going broke. Social Security has a \$2.8 trillion surplus and could pay out every benefit owed to every eligible American for the next 18 years. Now, is 18 years a terribly long time? No, it is not. Should we develop legislation to extend Social Security for decades after those 18 years? Yes, we should, and I have done that. But, please, I hope that my colleagues will not stand up here and tell us that Social Security is going broke because it is not.

I believe the American people feel very strongly that in these difficult times Social Security is a major safety net for so many of the elderly and disabled. When we vote tonight, our job is to send a very, very clear message that the Senate is not going to cut Social Security, it is not going to privatize Social Security, and it is not going to raise the age at which people get those Social Security benefits.

With that, I yield the floor for the Senator from Hawaii.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.