

Apollo Saturn V Rocket, which at the time defied the imagination of how large it could be—this is even bigger. This is called the Space Launch System, and atop it will sit the human capsule Orion, which will start the process of developing the systems, the techniques, the lifesaving, life-enhancing, and life-protecting measures and equipment that can take us all the way to Mars.

So we need a professional at NASA to help General Bolden and his very dedicated team. I certainly commend Dr. Dava Newman to the Senate as that person. We should confirm her today, and we can continue this Nation's civilian space program.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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.

Mr. ENZI. I yield back the remainder of our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has been yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Dava J. Newman, of Massachusetts, to be Deputy Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration?

Mr. BARRASSO. 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 bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY), the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 87, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 166 Ex.]

YEAS—87

Ayotte	Feinstein	Moran
Baldwin	Fischer	Murray
Barrasso	Franken	Nelson
Bennet	Gardner	Paul
Blumenthal	Gillibrand	Perdue
Blunt	Grassley	Peters
Booker	Hatch	Portman
Boozman	Heinrich	Reed
Boxer	Heitkamp	Reid
Brown	Heller	Risch
Burr	Hirono	Roberts
Cantwell	Hoeven	Rounds
Capito	Inhofe	Sanders
Cardin	Isakson	Sasse
Carper	Johnson	Schatz
Casey	Kaine	Scott
Cassidy	King	Sessions
Coats	Kirk	Shaheen
Cochran	Lankford	Shelby
Collins	Leahy	Stabenow
Coons	Lee	Sullivan
Corker	Manchin	Tester
Cornyn	Markey	Thune
Crapo	McCain	Tillis
Daines	McCaskill	Warner
Donnelly	McConnell	Warren
Durbin	Menendez	Whitehouse
Enzi	Merkley	Wicker
Ernst	Mikulski	Wyden

NOT VOTING—13

Alexander	Klobuchar	Toomey
Cotton	Murkowski	Udall
Cruz	Murphy	Vitter
Flake	Rubio	
Graham	Schumer	

The nomination was confirmed.

(At the request of Mr. McCONNELL, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I am proud that Florida has such a rich history and relationship with NASA. From the earliest launches of rockets that established manned missions, to the Apollo program and the continued support for the International Space Station, my home State of Florida is proud to take ownership in NASA's past and will certainly be a part of its future.

It is imperative that we continue to have a robust space exploration program that promotes America's economic, scientific, and security interests, and that effectively utilizes its resources. NASA must have strong leadership and I believe Dr. Dava Newman will serve the Administration well in her new role as Deputy Administrator of NASA. While other obligations kept me from Washington, I would have voted in favor of her nomination. •

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from Georgia.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with

Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 20 minutes each.

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

CREATING A NEW BEGINNING

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I rise today to address for the first time this august body, the United States Senate—the greatest governing body ever conceived. Out of respect, I have waited until we passed the 100-day mark to deliver this speech, but I rise today because I believe our Republic is in grave danger. We need to create a new beginning by dealing with the very real crisis of leadership we face today. It is why I ran for the Senate in the first place—because we need a new perspective in Washington. Like many Americans, I am outraged by Washington's dysfunction, its fiscal irresponsibility, its lack of leadership in foreign policy, its intrusiveness and overreach, and its negative impact on hard-working Americans.

Before being elected to the Senate, I had never been involved in politics. Simply put, I am a political outsider committed to changing the direction of our country. I grew up in a small military town in Middle Georgia, working on our family's farms. My mom and dad were public school teachers, and I grew up modestly, as did most people there. I worked my way through college and was blessed with a business career that took me from the factory floor to become a Fortune 500 CEO.

My story is not unique. It is the American story. Only in America is this possible, thanks to hard work and self-reliance. It is called the American dream, and it is our job to make sure it lasts. Many people today believe that this dream no longer exists, that we need big government to provide us with more and more financial security. I disagree totally. I believe our best days lie ahead. But we have to act boldly if we are to save this dream and our very way of life.

As an outsider to the political process, I am humbled by the privilege to serve my country as a U.S. Senator. I am sobered by the immense responsibility of representing the people of Georgia, and I am encouraged by the opportunity we have to solve this crisis of leadership and create a new beginning.

As one of the Original Thirteen Colonies, Georgia has long been blessed with outstanding statesmen in the U.S. Senate. The first Senator to serve in this seat in the first U.S. Congress in 1789 was Senator William Few. He also signed the U.S. Constitution. As fate would have it, Sarah Few Collins, a member of the team that helped me become Georgia's 37th U.S. Senator in this seat, is a direct descendant of Senator Few. I think that is pretty special. This desk I use on the Senate floor is also very meaningful to me. It has served such distinguished leaders from Georgia such as Saxby Chambliss, Zell

Miller, Sam Nunn, Herman Talmadge, and the venerable Richard B. Russell, Jr.

I rise to speak about three issues creating this national crisis of leadership we experience today: the abuse of Executive power, the significant deterioration of American foreign policy, and our out-of-control debt.

First, "What we are witnessing today is one of the greatest challenges to our constitutional system in the history of this country"—not my words but the words of George Washington University constitutional law professor Dr. Jonathan Turley, who incidentally voted twice for President Obama. Unbridled use of Executive orders and regulatory mandates has basically allowed this President to run the country without Congress for the past 6 years. According to Professor Turley, this sets dangerous precedents for future courts and future Presidents.

To create a new beginning, we must first get back to our founding principles articulated in our Constitution that created this miracle called America in the first place: economic opportunity, fiscal responsibility, limited government, and individual liberty. When government grows larger, individual liberty declines. I even believe that our Founders were committed to the concept of citizen legislators—people would come to Congress, do their work, and go home. I don't believe they could perceive of the potential rise of career politicians we experience today.

We also face a global security crisis that is getting worse by the day. This administration has created a situation where our allies don't trust us and our enemies don't fear us. Leading from behind has failed us as a foreign policy.

Right now, we face the threat of nuclear proliferation starting with Iran. As President Obama has conceded, this deal being negotiated would leave Iran with a breakout time "almost down to zero" in 10 to 15 years. As Prime Minister Netanyahu reminded us when he spoke before Congress, a nuclear Iran is not just a threat to Middle East security, it is not only a threat to U.S. security, it is indeed a threat to global security.

A nuclear Iran whose leaders are committed to the death of Israel and America would spark an unprecedented wave of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East. Under no circumstances can we allow Iran to become a nuclear weapons State—not now, not in 10 years, not ever.

After battling terrorism for the past 14 years and fighting two major wars, with thousands of American lives lost and billions spent, we still face terrorist threats from jihadist Islamic groups who openly vow to do us harm. We face a tough choice, however: Deal with them over there or wait and deal with the consequences here at home.

We are also witnessing the return of great power rivalries. Last year, Russia actually seized territory of a sovereign state and continues their aggression

today in the Ukraine. China is also growing more aggressive, doubling its military spending and flexing its muscle in the region.

New asymmetric threats, combined with traditional symmetric challenges, create unprecedented demand on our military at the very time this administration has reduced military spending to the point that we are about to have the smallest Army since World War II, the smallest Navy since World War I, and the smallest Air Force ever. This is simply unacceptable.

To address this global security crisis and create a new beginning, we must have a consistent and strong foreign policy. However, to have a strong foreign policy, we must have a strong defense.

Providing for the national defense is one of only 6 reasons outlined in the Constitution why 13 Colonies formed our Union in the first place. To have a strong defense, though, we have to have a strong economy, as we proved during the Cold War with the Soviet Union.

Our own fiscal irresponsibility jeopardizes our very ability to fund a strong military. ADM Michael Mullen, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, once said that the greatest threat to our national security is our own Federal debt. This debt crisis threatens our ability to defend our country, stand for freedom, and maintain our very way of life. It is a primary reason why we need to create a new beginning.

This debt crisis affects each of us every day. While the economy lurches along, we see working middle-class Americans struggling. Many people are having difficulty finding jobs, and those with jobs are lucky to have a job. Their wages remain stagnant, making it harder and harder to get from payday to payday. Many families can't afford to buy a home or plan for the future. Moms and dads fear they can't send their kids to college or prepare them for a good job. Many college graduates today have sizable student loans and still can't find meaningful employment. A comfortable retirement is only a dream for many.

Back home in Georgia, people share my outrage with Washington's fiscal irresponsibility. From what I have seen so far up here, there is not enough great sense of urgency in tackling this skyrocketing debt crisis. There are no innocent parties up here, either. Both sides have pushed us to the brink, contributing to this unsustainable level of debt we face today. In the last 6 years alone, the Federal Government has spent \$21.5 trillion, but it borrowed \$8 trillion, so that today we have a Federal debt of more than \$18 trillion. We simply cannot afford everything we are doing as a Federal Government. We are already overtaxed and overregulated.

The progressive policies of the past 100 years and particularly the egregious policies of this current administration have failed the very people

they were intended to help—the working middle class. Instead, Washington has created a spiraling situation that will only take us deeper into debt.

What is worse, we have over \$100 trillion in future unfunded liabilities related to Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, Federal pensions, and the interest on the Federal debt. While developing a long-term solution to this debt crisis, we also need to protect today's seniors and save our safety net programs so they will be there for people who really need them the most, when they need them. Shockingly, Social Security and Medicare trust funds will be totally insolvent in just a few short years, and worse, this administration has no plan to deal with that.

Unfortunately, we are already past the tipping point in this fiscal catastrophe. If interest rates today were at their 5.5 percent 30-year average, we would already be paying almost \$1 trillion in interest. That is twice what we spend on our military, and it is totally unmanageable.

People back home expect Washington to work. This fiscal irresponsibility drives people back in Georgia absolutely crazy. Doubling down on bigger government, more Federal programs, and more government spending is not the answer, as has been proven repeatedly over the last 100 years. We have to break the gridlock in Washington to solve this problem. One side wants to increase taxes; the other side wants spending cuts. The result is that we have had gridlock in Washington for a generation.

The real solution, of course, is to grow our economy. Just 1 percentage point of incremental GDP growth would generate over \$3 trillion of Federal tax revenues in the next decade alone. Combine that with the elimination of truly duplicative programs, and we can develop a long-term plan to solve this debt crisis, as well as get Americans back to work in meaningful, well-paying jobs.

To create a new beginning, my focus in this body will be to add to the debate about how to grow our economy, rein in our outrageous spending, and solve this debt crisis.

To grow our economy, three priorities should be addressed right away. First, we need to totally reinvent how we fund our Federal Government. Many States, such as Georgia, have a balanced budget law, and so should Washington. American families can't spend more than they take in, and neither should their government.

Our archaic tax system is choking growth, holding back innovation, and discouraging investment. Eventually, I believe, we should transition from an income tax to a simple consumption tax, such as the fair tax, that would level the playing field with the rest of the world.

While that debate will take some time, there are things we can do right now to stimulate our economy. We need to reduce our corporate tax rate

and eliminate entirely our repatriation tax to be more competitive with other countries. At the same time, we need to eliminate corporate welfare and make our tax system fairer and simpler for every American.

We also have to rein in our out-of-control regulators. This President has created the fourth branch of government—the regulators—which today makes more rules that affect our lives and our jobs than does Congress.

Finally, we need to unlock our full energy potential to get this economy moving. We need to develop our domestic natural resources. Isn't it time we finally develop a long-term energy policy that unleashes this potential while protecting our environment?

Doing these things now will also allow us to fund our infrastructure needs, improve our education process, become more competitive with the rest of the world, create well-paying, 21st-century jobs, and ignite the next economic boom for our kids and grandkids.

I have used the word "crisis" carefully and thoughtfully today. The first step toward making the tough choices required to change our direction comes from a true realization that we indeed have a crisis. Americans respond better than anyone in history to a true crisis, but we are not always the quickest to recognize we have one.

To create a truly new beginning, it is time for this eminent body, the U.S. Senate, to rise above partisan politics and do the right thing. It starts with leadership. It starts with making hard choices. It starts with telling the American people the unvarnished truth. It starts with no longer kicking the can down the road. It starts with having the courage to actually solve these problems independent of how it might affect our reelection chances.

My motivation is very simple. I do not want to be a member of the first generation in American history that has to tell its kids that we are leaving them a country that is worse off than our parents left us.

Ronald Reagan once said:

Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it along to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States when men were free.

Let us fight to find common ground to create a new beginning for our country, for people back home who are struggling, and for the future of our children and our children's children.

As I close, I am reminded of a seldom-quoted closing sentence of the Declaration of Independence:

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

Our Founders got it right. They would remind us of that commitment

and encourage us today to put our differences aside, to work together to solve these sometimes overwhelming problems.

Together, we can put our differences aside. Together, we can do the right thing. Together, we can create a new beginning.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

CONGRATULATING SENATOR PERDUE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate our new colleague from Georgia on his insightful and accurate assessment of the biggest challenges confronting our country. Not only did he lay out the biggest challenges, he certainly laid out the best solutions to those challenges to get this country moving again and to guarantee, as he put it, that we leave behind for the next generation a better country than our parents left behind for us.

I congratulate our new colleague for an outstanding major speech.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I am grateful that we have the distinguished Senator from Georgia in the Senate. I really enjoyed his remarks here this evening. He laid out a program that we ought to follow.

I am very proud to have the Senator here, and I am proud to serve with him. We wish him the very, very best in every way. I think he will enjoy this body in spite of all the vagaries and varieties of it. But he is a great addition to this body, and we are very appreciative that he is here with us.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I wish to note that my colleague from Georgia just made a great speech. In it he listed those who sat in the desk he now sits in—Nunn, Russell, Chambliss. It is obvious he has inherited that seat, and he is equal to the task of those gentlemen. I commend him on his first speech, and I am honored to serve with him in the Senate.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I wish to say, I knew the Senator from Georgia prior to being a Senator. He was an outstanding CEO in a major public company. He has done business all over the world. I know when he campaigned in Georgia for this seat, what he said was that he was going to be the adult in the room. I just want to say that he certainly has distinguished himself since he came here in acting that way and looking at the big issues that our Nation has to deal with.

I know that he knows that still the greatest threat to our country right now is our inability to get our fiscal

house in order, and I really believe that Senator PERDUE is going to not just be a leader on the Foreign Relations Committee, as he already is—hugely helpful in the vote that we had last week relative to Iran—but I think as much as anybody in the Senate, Senator PERDUE is going to help drive this body to responsibly deal with fiscal issues we have to deal with.

We have a lot of work to do. We haven't even begun. I look forward to working with him, not only to ensure that our Nation is safe and secure but that we get our fiscal house in order. I could not be more gratified that Senator PERDUE is part of this body and serving in the manner that he is.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate the Senator from Georgia on the content of his speech as well as on his enthusiasm and also on how he follows through on what he says. I get to serve with him on the Budget Committee, and I have been extremely impressed.

At his first meeting, I introduced him as someone who has balanced budgets. He corrected me. In the private sector, one can't just balance the budget; you have to do better than that. He has that kind of experience to bring to the Budget Committee and to this body, and I look forward to working with him diligently on the budget. We only had 6 weeks to do what hadn't been done in 6 years, and he was a tremendous help in getting through that process and understanding some of the complexities. He is a good numbers man. So when he talks about what we need to do with the budget and paying down the debt and the ways we can do it, I look forward to working with him to get those things accomplished.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I wish to commend my fellow freshman, Senator PERDUE, for a great maiden speech. I like particularly his emphasis upon growing our gross domestic product, growing our economy, and making it stronger. It echoes what Senator ENZI just said. It is not just about balancing the budget but about creating the sort of growth that creates more prosperity for the families who depend upon this prosperity for better jobs for them and their families.

It was a great speech. I thank the Senator for capturing the optimism that makes the United States unique.

I yield back.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING DR. DAVID RANKIN

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I wish to honor Southern Arkansas University president Dr. David Rankin who will retire in June after nearly half a century of dedication to education.