

budget cuts, and many of those voted against it in the committee. Now, no one in this body understands sequestration any better than my friend from Illinois.

Sequestration was supposed to be so absurd—I repeat—so foolish, that it would force Congress to balance in a sensible manner. Yet what the Republicans considered lunacy a few years ago is now the preferred form of legislating, the preferred form of budgeting. That tells you everything you need to know about today's Republican Party. They are beating their chests about how great sequestration is. Isn't it great that all of these Federal agencies are being cut.

The Reed amendment would have allowed the Democrats and Republicans to negotiate a balanced budget and would have rescinded sequestration, while ensuring adequate funding to the Department of Defense and nondefense programs. Instead, by rejecting Senator REED's legislation, the Republicans have effectively said spend first, budget later. Here is what they have come up with. They are saying: Ready, fire, aim. Or they are saying: Fire, ready, aim. We know they are not saying: Ready, aim, fire. They have it all backwards, like everything they have done here legislatively—like ostriches with their heads buried deep in the sand.

The majority leader and Republicans continue to deny the need for a bipartisan budget. They deny the need to fix sequestration, just as they deny the urgent need to authorize the Export-Import Bank, which employs 165,000 people in America, as we speak. It expires at the end of this month.

They deny the urgent need to fix our roads, rails, and bridges. That program is going to expire in 6 weeks, which creates millions of jobs—millions of jobs.

Regardless of what Republicans tell themselves, they cannot wish these important issues to just disappear. It is our job to address these matters that affect working Americans.

Here we are in June, months before funding for the government runs out. We have plenty of time to sit down and work out an agreement that both sides can work out. It appears to me what the Republicans are doing is that we are heading for another shutdown. They did it once; they are going to do it again. They want to do nothing now. They want to wait until the fiscal year ends and then lock it up—close up government. There is no reason for this to become yet another manufactured crisis, and that is what we have here.

We can, I repeat, months before the funding for government runs out, do something about it. Do they desire another closed government? I hope not. But it appears that is where we are headed. The Republicans are unwilling to do things that are real. So I urge my Republican colleagues to change course, instead of barreling ahead with bills they know are going to fail.

The Defense authorization bill, the President is going to veto. The veto will be upheld. We will do it over here. But the House already has enough votes to sustain the President's veto. It is just moving forward for reasons that I do not fully understand. I urge them to change course, work with us to forge an agreement that can get signed into law.

The majority leader's party can continue to ignore and procrastinate all they want, but eventually we will need to negotiate a budget free of sequestration, a budget that protects our military and also nondefense, our middle class. Eventually, we will need to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank, I repeat, which sustains hundreds of thousands of jobs and is responsible for billions of dollars in U.S. exports.

Now, eventually we need to find a lasting way to fund on a long-term basis our American highways. Fifty percent of our highways are deficient, 64,000 bridges—50 percent of those are structurally deficient. Not far from here, over the great Memorial Bridge, they are closing two lanes. Why? Because it has rotted away. Hundreds of thousands of people go over that every day—or they used to. So why wait? Instead of waiting for the President to veto their sham funding mechanism and then scramble to craft some last-minute, hastily wrought continuing resolution, the Republicans should work with us on a bipartisan solution now. We are ready to cooperate with Republicans to pass legislation that keeps America safe and protects the middle class. But to do that, my Republican colleagues will first have to pull their heads out of the sand.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CORTON). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided, with the Democrats controlling the first half and the majority controlling the second half.

The assistant Democratic leader.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, we are considering this bill, and you can see by the size of it, it is a major undertaking. It comes up every year. It is the Department of Defense Authorization Act. It is an extraordinarily important bill. It literally authorizes programs for the defense of America.

We have two able leaders who brought the bill to the floor. One is the

chairman of the Armed Services Committee, JOHN MCCAIN, a man with whom I entered the House many years ago and a man whose reputation and service to America is well known. He is someone who has served in the U.S. Navy, was a prisoner of war during the Vietnam war, and has been a leader in speaking out on behalf of the military throughout his life. It is built into his family. It is built into his soul.

On our side, we have Senator JACK REED from Rhode Island. Senator REED is a graduate of the West Point Military Academy. He served as well in the Active Army. He brings that service, that part of his life to his work on the Democratic side of the aisle. When it came to putting this bill together, I do not think we could have picked two more able leaders from the Senate, a Republican and a Democrat, to bring this bill to the floor.

They have their differences. But for the most part they agree on this bill. It was troubling this morning to hear the Republican majority leader suggest that the differences we have over this bill suggest a lack of commitment by Democrats to the military of the United States. That is not true. It is not fair. We are as committed on our side of the aisle as those on the other side of the aisle when it comes to the men and women in uniform—committed to making certain that they have what they need to be trained, to fight effectively, and to come home safely.

We are also committed to bringing them home to a welcoming America, preparing veterans programs for the rest of their lives, so they can have productive lives, happy lives after having risked their lives for America.

So to suggest that the Republicans are for the military and Democrats are against it, I regret that the majority leader made that suggestion. Both sides are committed—both the chairman and the ranking member are committed. But what is the issue that divides us when it comes to this bill? It is basically an issue of funding. Here is what it comes down to: We have a Budget Control Act, and if we do not hit the numbers in spending, in comes sequestration. What is sequestration? It is an across-the-board cut.

We do not want to see that happen. We have seen it. We know what it does. It was devastating to the Department of Defense when we went into sequestration. I know because I chaired the Appropriations Committee and I listened to the Secretary of Defense and the leaders from our branches and services tell us: It is impossible for us to budget an effective national security if we have to wonder whether we are going to face an across-the-board cut. I can understand that, not only in readiness, which is essential to the survival of our troops, but also in the procurement of substantial, expensive, important, and necessary technology.

So Senator MCCAIN on the Republican side brings to the floor this authorization bill and says: We will solve

the problem of sequestration by inserting about \$38 to \$40 billion in wartime emergency funding into the Department of Defense. Well, we don't believe that is the right way to go, neither does the Secretary of Defense, neither does the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff because it is a 1-year fix.

We need a fix that has some continuity and predictability to it. Therein lies the difference in approach between Democrats and Republicans. Is one side patriotic and the other side not patriotic because we disagree on a budget reform? Of course not. We happen to believe there is a better way to do this and so does the President.

But there is another element I want to make a reference to. The Republican majority leader came here and said: Well, the Democrats are fighting to put more money into the rest of government—nondefense. It is true, we are. He used his two examples: Well, they want to hire more people at the Internal Revenue Service and maybe they want to put another coat of paint on their offices. That is what the majority leader said.

Well, it could not be further from the truth. I will argue for adequate funding for the Internal Revenue Service. The overwhelming majority of Americans who pay their fair share of taxes and are honest people and try to follow the law should be respected. Those who don't, those who try to cheat our tax system should be held accountable. I do not think that is a radical idea. It takes employees at the Internal Revenue Service to make sure that is true. Right now we have cut back on their spending.

But let me go to another issue which I think really tells the story about why we think we not only need to make sure the Department of Defense is adequately funded, but we want to make sure other areas of government are adequately funded. Once every 67 seconds in America someone is diagnosed with Alzheimer's—once every 67 seconds. It is a disease which is now growing at a rapid pace because of the aging of our population. It is extraordinarily expensive. Under Medicare and Medicaid, \$200 billion were spent last year in the care of those with Alzheimer's.

That number is projected to grow dramatically in the years to come. Well, it is a heartbreaking disease, as you see someone whom you dearly love, someone in your family, and their mind is not as responsive as it once was. It is extraordinarily devastating to these families, and it is extraordinarily expensive to taxpayers.

So what will we do about it? I hope we will be committed, on a bipartisan basis, to medical research. Medical research, through the National Institutes of Health, is part of the nondefense budget that we are trying to help by resolving this whole question of sequestration. It is not about putting a coat of paint on my office. That is not why I am fighting to make sure the non-defense part of the budget is not vic-

timized by sequestration. I am fighting for the National Institutes of Health.

How important is it that they not face sequestration? They have done it. They faced it. Let me tell you just one example of what it meant. Dr. Frank LaFerla is at the University of California in Irvine. He is a medical researcher. He and his team have created mice that develop Alzheimer's disease in the same way humans do. Now, his research team can study that disease in these mice, but the mice need to age 18 months before research on potential Alzheimer's disease treatments can be done.

In 2013, when we faced sequestration, across-the-board cuts in the budget, Dr. LaFerla was faced with the prospect of having to sacrifice these laboratory animals and close his lab. If that had happened, months of research would have been wasted. That is what happens when you do something as mindless as sequestration in the Department of Defense and in the National Institutes of Health.

We even have an amendment, which I hope will not be offered but is pending—has now been filed, I should say, in the Senate, which would cut medical research in the Department of Defense. I wonder what my colleagues are thinking; that we in America should cut back on medical research as a way of balancing our budget. I am praying for the day that Dr. LaFerla or someone like him will find a way to delay the onset of Alzheimer's and, God willing, find a cure. If they do, the investment in the National Institutes of Health will be paid off over and over and over again, and human suffering will be avoided.

So when I hear the Republican majority leader dismiss the idea of funding outside the Department of Defense, when I hear him suggest that the Democrats are trying to work toward a budget solution that is fair to the Department of Defense and all other agencies so that we "have enough money to paint our offices"—that is what he said—I am troubled by that. There is much more at stake.

When it comes to medical research, I would hope the Senator from Kentucky feels, as all of us do, this is not partisan at all. The victims of Alzheimer's are of both political parties and people who never vote. They are just across the board. We ought to be committed to making certain that medical research makes a difference and that we believe in it. I hope this amendment that is being offered to cut Department of Defense medical research is not offered, because if it is, I plan to come to the floor and tell the story about what that medical research has meant over the last 20 years.

For example, the second largest investment in breast cancer research is in the U.S. Department of Defense. There are dramatic stories to be told about what they have discovered and what they have been able to do in the Department of Defense. The suggestion

that we should eliminate this research to me is a very bad one. It does not reflect the reality of the fright and concern that come with a diagnosis of breast cancer.

I am prepared for that battle, not just on breast cancer but on all of the other areas of medical research in the Department of Defense, as well as medical research in the National Institutes of Health. If there is one issue that should unite us, Democrats and Republicans, it is medical research. I will tell you, the people I represent in Illinois, regardless of party affiliation, believe that we in both political parties should be making this commitment.

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. COATS. 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. COATS. Mr. President, I know we are in morning business time, and if I could speak on the Republican time, reserving the time remaining for the Democrats, I would be pleased to do that.

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

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I rise today, the 13th time, for the "Waste of the Week." So far, we have identified waste in many areas, ranging from the familiar, such as the duplication of government programs and outrageous spending and lack of control, to the bizarre, such as the government-funded massages for New Zealand rabbits. I have received more responses on that than I have for some of the major items I have listed. Every once in a while, I throw in a "Can you believe they do that?"

To date, we have estimated nearly \$67 billion of fraud, abuse, and waste. This is taxpayer money. These are taxpayer dollars that are coming in for programs that the Congressional Budget Office, the Government Accountability Office, and other special investigators have looked at and said: Why are we spending this money in the first place? It is a total waste, it is fraud, and it has been abused.

So we are at the level of nearly two-thirds of our goal of \$100 billion and moving forward.

And so today, I wish to talk about yet another fiscal situation we have come across that is costing the taxpayers the hard-earned dollars. They're sending them to Washington and they want accountability. Since we are doing debate on the Defense bill this week, I thought I would look at the defense issue. I will use contracting accountability as an example of the need for another effort to save the taxpayers' dollars because they are being wasted.