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 nondefense part of the budget is not victimized 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.

Now, it is not uncommon for every agency of the Federal Government to use contractors. The Department of Defense uses contractors. They do necessary work. They provide services for our troops overseas. We owe our troops, we owe them, given the sacrifices they are making to provide those needed services in an effective and efficient way, but we also owe the taxpayer clear oversight in terms of how their money is spent to make sure that these services that are provided, these tasks that are undertaken by defense contractors as well as all Federal contractors are done so in an accountable way.

The issue today arises out of a report by the Special Investigator General for Afghanistan Reconstruction. That report identified a total of $135 million of questionable costs spent by one specific contractor between October 2011 and March 2014. He said that in most cases the funds that were spent were not supported with adequate documentation or did not have prior approval. In another instance, this same contractor also overcharged the government by over $1 million. The government lost about $37,000 in interest payments. That is a little bit of change in a total of billions of dollars being spent, but nevertheless it is not all that small of an amount to a number of Americans who work awfully hard to pay their taxes, and they want those taxes to be used wisely.

Again, this same contractor in three other cases violated Federal procurement law in securing contracts totaling almost $5 million.

So here we have one contractor that has been singled out among many but put in place $135 million of questionable costs, and the American taxpayers have every right to know how and where their tax dollars are spent and particularly those tax dollars which are spent on providing our Armed Forces, men and women in uniform, with the necessary services they need.

This was compounded when in 2012 headlines showed that two former employees of this particular contractor, in a video, were drunk or under the influence of narcotics during parties that were allegedly thrown ''every other day'' at the contractor's operations center in Kabul. So to compound the problem, not only were the costs questioned, but also the character and behavior of the employees were something we certainly are not proud of.

All of this happened, as the video shows, while weapons were present. Bonfires were also lit, and employees would often throw live ammunition rounds and fire extinguishers into the flames.

Some might say: Well, OK, that is a one-off. That is an aberration. That surely doesn't happen all the time. There is a bad apple here, and there are a bunch of good apples in the barrel.

Yes, there are contractors that are providing services to our men and women who are doing it in a responsible and legal way, but the special inspector for Afghanistan has also found multiple examples of similar types of waste. In fact, since its creation, the special inspector for Afghanistan has undertaken 324 investigations—he is a busy man—and has accounted for over $571 million of misspent taxpayer dollars, and this is just in Afghanistan. As you know, we have operations around the world, and when we total everything, who knows what that final number will be.

I am pleased to report that while these numbers are disturbing, there is also progress being made. The special investigator for Afghanistan whom I have referred to has made over 200 recommendations for reforms and over 160 of those recommendations have been adopted by the Department of Defense in trying to help safeguard Federal dollars. So I don't want to leave the impression that something isn't being done about this. Nevertheless, it is important that we bring these things to light so that we can put procedures in place that will prevent them from happening again.

Also, I am pleased that title VIII of this bill we are now debating on this floor, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016, directly addresses defense acquisition policy and management and would make several reforms to the contracting process. So action is being taken. For instance, the bill that calls for the Department of Defense to establish a preference for fixed-price contracts when developing new programs is a needed reform that is part of this legislation we are debating now. Entering into fixed-price contracts helps eliminate the kinds of questionable costs and cost overruns seen in many previous contracts.

We need to make sure, Congress needs to make sure, all of us need to make sure that our service men and women have the support they need to defend our Nation. That is why it is so frustrating when we hear about these instances of contractors that are supposed to be supporting our troops but instead are wasting money, whether intentionally or through error or through simply misbehavior.

So what we have done today is add another $571 million to our taxpayer savings gauge. As you can see, we are pushing toward the goal of $100 billion. We hope to go past that. There is no end of issues that need to be addressed so that we can tell the American people that we are running an efficient and effective shop in Congress and that we are being careful with their taxpayer dollars.

I look forward to returning to the floor next week for my next installment of the ''Waste of the Week.''

With that, 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. 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, given the fact that no one has come to the floor, I wish to speak on another matter. I will do so, and when other Members come to the floor to speak, I will try to wrap up and save that time for them.

OBAMACARE

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, last week I chaired a hearing of the Joint Economic Committee entitled ''Examining the Employment Effects of the Affordable Care Act.'' The purpose of the hearing was to discuss how the Affordable Care Act has affected the ability of Americans to earn and do business, particularly for small businessmen.

The impact of the Affordable Care Act—better known as ObamaCare—is particularly important to discuss at this point this year now that the delayed employer provisions are in effect and employers are feeling the pinch. Frankly, ''pinch'' is the wrong word; they are feeling the hammer blow of the burdens imposed on them, both from regulatory and a tax standpoint that are directly affecting their ability to grow, to provide jobs, and to expand their business.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the law, ObamaCare, will reduce the total number of hours worked by as much as 2 percent from the years 2017 to 2024.

People said: Two percent—is that a big deal?

Yes, it is a big deal. It is equal to 2.5 million full-time-equivalent jobs—for workers who are looking for those jobs.

The CBO reasoned that this would result from new taxes embedded throughout the ObamaCare program—not talked about when this was passed. In fact, nothing was talked about that was passed in terms of the way people could understand it, as acknowledged by the former head of the House of Representatives.

With new taxes and measures that employers will face and the financial benefits that some will be imposed, the CBO estimates a 1-percent reduction in total pay over the same timeframe as a result of ObamaCare.

This was something that was sold to the American people without credibility. All the promises that were made, some so defiantly made by the President. He said: Take my word for it, period, not one penny of increase in your premium cost. Keep your doctor. If you like your doctor, keep your doctor. If you like your health care plan, keep your health care plan. What a misrepresentation of the bill this has been.

I have received many stories in my office, by email, by regular mail, by phone calls with descriptions of the impact this law has had and the broken promises that have imposed higher premiums, higher copays, higher deductibles, and higher costs for the American people. So we anxiously