United States of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 2015 No. 97

# Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

## PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Lord of our lives, whose commands we cherish and in whose service we find joy, thank You for the gift of this day. Inspire our lawmakers to fill the waiting hours with labor that will open doors of new possibilities for our Nation and world. Lord, stir their hearts to seize today's opportunities to do Your will on Earth, repairing yesterday's wrongs and grasping tomorrow's promises. Enlighten their hearts with the knowledge of Your love, as they strive to make this world a better place. Use them to provide cheer to sad hearts, faith to doubting hearts, and courage to fearful hearts.

We pray in Your loving Name. Amen.

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

## RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). The majority leader is recognized.

## DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION AND APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it was heartening to see so many Democrats joining us yesterday in advancing a good Defense authorization bill by a very large bipartisan margin. It now puts the Senate on the path to bring the bill to final passage tomorrow. Once that happens, the Senate will have taken a significant step by doing right for the men and women who risk everything to protect us. It is certainly good news, but it is not the end of the story either, because while the Defense authorization bill makes promises to our troops, it is the Defense appropriations bill that actually fulfills those promises.

That is the bill we will consider next. I would expect everyone who votes for the Defense authorization bill would also want to support moving to Defense appropriations because I am sure every Democratic colleague who just voted to make promises to our troops will want to help us actually fulfill those promises by voting for the Defense appropriations bill as well.

They might look to the example Democrats just set in the House of Representatives last week. House Democrats appear to understand just how cynical it would have been to make promises and then not fund them, which is why we saw dozens join Republicans to pass Defense appropriations. House Democrats must have known their constituents wouldn't fall for an ''I was for the troops before I was against them'' argument. House Democrats also must have seen how heartless it would have been to deny funding for America's heroes as part of some ridiculous filibuster summer plan to extract more cash for giant bureaucracies such as the IRS.

I have to think Senate Democrats would see things the same way. Judging by what we just saw last week in the Senate Appropriations Committee, there is no reason to think otherwise. Democrats and Republicans came together in the Appropriations Committee to pass the Defense appropriations bill we are about to consider by a huge margin of 27 to 3. Not only did every single Democrat support this bill in committee, but Democrats had some pretty supportive things to say about it too.

One Democratic friend called the appropriations bill ''a key investment in our national security'' that funds ''a number of Hawaii's defense needs.'' Another Democrat noted it would fund a program that is one of her ''top priorities.'' Here is what another Democrat said of the bill: ''It will directly protect and grow Connecticut's defense manufacturing industry and the hundreds of thousands of jobs it supports across our State.'' He went on to say it will ''implement a well-deserved pay raise for our troops who put their lives on the line each and every day.'' He concluded by saying it is a ''victory for Connecticut.''

A victory for Connecticut—now there is a rousing endorsement of the bill we will vote on tomorrow. It is no wonder each of these Democratic colleagues voted to endorse the appropriations bill. It is good news for our troops and their families. It is good news for our country. These Democratic friends must not want to see a ''victory for Connecticut'' squashed or one of their ''top priorities'' sacrificed for the sake of some ploy to funnel a few more dollars to Washington's big bureaucracies.

They must think this filibuster summer idea their party leaders hatched isn't good for America's national security or for job security in their own States. They must know you can't take credit for promises made in a defense authorization bill if you then vote against the appropriations bill that would fund them.

I hope Senators in both parties would join together once more to bring the Defense authorization bill over the goal line tomorrow and then begin debate on the inseparable appropriations bill too.

If Senators want to amend that appropriations bill or strike a rider, then they should vote with us to get on the legislation so we can consider these amendments or those motions to strike. If Senators want to try to increase or reduce the level of funding in

● This ''bullet'' symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

that bill, the only way they will have a chance to try doing that is if they vote with us to get on the bill in the first place.

So bring us your ideas. Bring them on out. Let's debate them. Whether you have a proposal to boost the helicopter industry in Connecticut or a plan to repair naval vessels, amphibious and surface ships in places such as California, Washington, Hawaii, and Virginia, the only way to ensure ideas like these are considered is by voting to open debate on the appropriations bill, and the only way to ensure they will not be heard at all—at all—is by voting to filibuster. That wouldn't be good for anyone.

So let's not kill the opportunity to even have those debates because here is what we know: The young men and women of our volunteer force don't need a summer packed full of Democratic filibusters, and they certainly don't need a Democratic shutdown surprise in the fall. All they ask for are the weapons, the training, and the skills they need to prevail on the battlefield. We can give it to them. We are almost there.

Democrats already joined Republicans to make a promise to the troops, and with just a little more good bipartisan work we will see Democrats join with Republicans to fulfill those promises. I have to think they will because failing to do so would mean making empty promises to both constituents and our troops.

## RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

## DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION AND SEQUESTRATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, my friend the Republican leader throws the word ''filibuster'' around. He has a right to do that because he is an expert. He has led in this Senate more filibusters than all previous leaders put together. As the Republican leader, he has engineered about 300 filibusters, stopping basically everything—certainly slowing down everything on the President's agenda. It was a plan he was a part of and he certainly lived up to that.

The 46 Democrats over here are just as patriotic as the 54 Republicans over there. We care about the troops just as much as the Republicans over there, but we also believe that when my friend the Republican leader throws around terms such as ''vast bureaucracy,'' that we want to fund a vast bureaucracy, I don't think we should start talking about bureaucracies. The Pentagon is a pretty good bureaucracy in itself. I admire very much the Secretary of Defense. He does the best job he can. Our Secretary of Defense does not agree with the Republicans as to how the troops should be funded.

My friend the Republican leader knows the legislation before this body is going to be vetoed by the President. He said so. He put it in writing. The President said that on appropriations bills, if they are at the level of sequestration, he will veto those also. So this little magic game I mentioned yesterday that the Republican leader has engineered, saying we are going to take care of defense, and with the vast bureaucracy, we don't care what happens to them—well, in this ''vast bureaucracy'' are things such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Homeland Security Secretariat, which is important for protecting our homeland, making sure airports are safe, making sure our borders are protected. That is the vast bureaucracy he is talking about.

So we Democrats want to make sure there is equality. We believe in funding defense, and we are going to do everything we can. There has been no better example of that than the ranking member of the subcommittee dealing with defense, the senior Senator from Illinois. Senator DURBIN has worked so hard to be fair—fair to Democrats and fair to Republicans—and I am confident he will continue to do that.

I am also confident he cares about the other agencies we are so concerned about, not only the few I have mentioned. To have a secure nation takes more than bombs and bullets. Having a secure nation is also making sure we have a good education system, a good transportation system, a good program to maintain research for health.

The most famous organization in the history of the world for investigating disease is the National Institutes of Health. We know what sequestration did to them once, and they are about to do it again, if this little magic game the Republican leader is engineering goes on. It will be cut like everybody else. It is not defense.

The one fact Senator MCCONNELL fails to mention is the fact that it is all borrowed money—$100 billion, approximately—to get what he wants done in the Defense bill. It is borrowed money in the so-called overseas contingency fund.

We are going to do what we think is appropriate for the country.

## 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INTERSTATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this month we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Eisenhower Interstate Highway System. The Interstate Highway System was one of the signature accomplishments of the entire 20th century. If there was ever a list of the seven wonders of the United States, our Nation's highway system would be on that list.

Consider the sheer size and complexity of our transportation system. The Interstate Highway System encompasses 50,000 miles of highways, bridges, and tunnels, and that doesn't count the railways. It connects East and West, North and South. A person can drive from Boston directly to Seattle, 3,020 miles, or from Laredo, TX, to Duluth, MN, 1,831 miles, all on the Interstate Highway System. The Federal Interstate Highway System serves all 50 States and the District of Columbia.

The Interstate Highway System is a central nervous system of our Nation's economy, creating vital corridors for goods and services for American commerce. In every community in our Nation, from our largest cities and our large metropolitan areas to the small rural communities that have just a few people—and I mean a few people—our interstate highways bear the name of Republican President Dwight D. Eisenhower, whose vision of a connected America resulted in the Federal Highway Act of 1956.

How did this good man, Dwight Eisenhower, come up with this idea? Well, he was ordered, as a young officer in the Army, to bring a military contingent across the United States during World War I. It was awful. He never forgot that. There was no Federal highway system. There were barely highways. There were barely roads.

With his experience as Allied commander of troops in World War II, he came back from that recognizing how important moving goods and services for the military around Europe was, and how he had tried that in the United States and it did not work. But he was going to change that. That is what he did. President Eisenhower, a Republican, understood that the interstate highway complex was an investment worth making. He realized the money spent on roads and bridges creates jobs—lots of jobs. President Eisenhower, with all of his military experience and background, understood that an interstate system was important to our national security.

My friend talks about the security of our troops. Of course they are important. We so admire these men and women who protect us. But to have a safe and secure Nation, we also have to have things such as a good highway system.

My friend the Republican leader fails to mention that. It is part of our national security needs, as evidenced by Dwight Eisenhower. I wonder what President Eisenhower would think of today's Republican Party and its lack of concern for the Interstate Highway System. I believe he would be greatly disappointed. Just a few weeks from now, as the month of July comes to a close, funding for the Federal highway program will be gone. It will expire. But you would not know that congressional Republicans are watching the same movie the American people are watching. Republicans in Congress have refused to work with us in making an adequate, long-term investment in our country's surface transportation system.

Instead, the Republicans see the Federal highway program and trust fund as some sort of a hot potato. Stay away from it. It should never be dealt with