

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 Se-

attle, 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

and only be kicked down the road, leaving millions of jobs behind. Even with the looming deadline, Republicans are showing no haste in forming a plan to address our Nation's crumbling roads, railroads, bridges, and transit systems.

We have one of the most unique makeups in one of our committees that this body has ever seen. We have one of the most liberal Members of the Senate, BARBARA BOXER, and her counterpart is one of the most conservative Members of this body, JIM INHOFE from Oklahoma. They know the importance. These two divergent political spectrums know that we have to do something about the highway system. They are going to put out a bill. They are going to authorize it. Then we need to figure out a way to fund that.

Republicans don't seem interested in that. Even with its looming deadline, Republicans are showing no haste in forming a plan or to develop one for this system that we have to do something about. Congressional Republicans see no urgency to schedule hearings, to mark up a bill, to take testimony in other ways or to make the highway trust fund solvent. With every day that passes, our Federal highway trust fund inches closer and closer to insolvency.

It is clear we will need to get to that reauthorization of the highway program either this week or next week. But we won't. Look at the schedule. It means we are left with July. Looking at the Senate calendar for July, assuming that the Republican leader will continue to keep the Senate out of session on Fridays, we will have, in reality, 15 days to reauthorize the Federal highway system—15 days. Fifteen session days is precious little time, especially when Republicans don't feel any urgency to solve this problem. Of course, we all know how this is going to play out. This is straight out of the Republican's playbook—the manufactured crisis playbook.

They have written the book, and they are adding chapters to it every week of this Congress. Republicans will drag their feet until the very last minute, refusing to work with us on a long-term solution to our Nation's infrastructure woes. Then, when the deadline is imminent, the Republican leader will offer yet another short-term extension to stave off another disaster of his own making.

This is and should be unacceptable to everyone here. We already have had 33 Republican short-term fixes. We do not need a 34th. But that is where we are headed. That is too bad. What we do need is a Republican Party that sees the value of a robust, long-term investment in our Nation's highways. We need a Republican Party that sees what President Eisenhower saw 50 years ago—half a century—that investing in our infrastructure is a shot in the arm to our economy.

There are hundreds of thousands of shovel-ready jobs just waiting for Congress to act. On the other hand, failing

to meet our country's infrastructure needs will be catastrophic. The American Society of Civil Engineers predicts that our economy would lose \$1 trillion unless we invest in surface transportation—\$1 trillion. Let's not forget the safety implications of sitting on our hands. Half of our roads are in poor condition. Tens of thousands of bridges across the country are structurally deficient. Railroads are without important, lifesaving braking systems. They need to be refurbished and some parts of them reinvented. Doing nothing is not and should not be an option.

The Republican leader should change course and abandon his policy of governing by crisis. We can get started on a long-term, bipartisan reauthorization of the Federal highway program today. All we need is for Republican Members of Congress and their leaders to focus on American jobs and the traveling American public's safety. They have not done that. This is too bad.

Mr. President, there are a number of Senators on the floor.

Will the Chair announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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, with the time equally divided, with the Democrats controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half.

The Senator from Michigan.

MICHIGAN PRODUCTIVITY AND INNOVATION

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I am truly blessed to represent the people of Michigan in the Senate. My State was carved out in one era by the ice age and again 200 years ago by the Congress. It is comprised of more than just two beautiful peninsulas bordered by four Great Lakes.

Since our Nation's founding, Michigan has been at the frontier of America, helping to build a stronger and more secure country. The Northwest Ordinance, affirmed by the very first Congress, created the midwestern region from which the Michigan Territory would be born. In the 19th century, pioneers moved to what was then the western frontier to settle in Michigan and its neighboring States.

The Peters family was among them. My family made the long journey from New York and settled in Rochester, MI, in the early 1840s. They were among the earliest pioneers to settle in my State. From that time on, generations of Michiganders pioneered a State de-

voted to great public education. While the Northwest Ordinance made primary education a priority and stated that "schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged" in the new territory, higher education also had a place that made our State great very early. Twenty years before the founding of the State of Michigan, the University of Michigan was founded, one of the first public universities in the country. Later, Michigan State University would become one of the pioneer land grant universities. While the two schools may be rivals on the gridiron, they have long complimented each other to the benefit of our State.

Today, Michigan is home to 93 universities, colleges, and community colleges. Michigan grew rapidly as migrants from across the country and immigrants from around the world were drawn to our supplies of timber, ore, arable land, and abundant fresh water. As a new century dawned across America, Michigan continued to grow with the advent of industrialization and mass manufacturing, from mining and forestry at the western tip of the Upper Peninsula to the booming auto factories of Detroit. Michigan embodied the growing optimism, opportunity, and prosperity that would be America's crowning achievement in the 20th century.

Michigan factories would turn into the great arsenal of democracy, building the armadas that would defeat tyranny, win the Second World War, and, in the process, create America's middle class. During World War II, my father, Herb Peters, was a proud soldier in Eisenhower's Army, helping free France from Nazi occupation. It was there that he would meet my mother, Madeleine Vignier, a beautiful young French woman. They were married and raised me and my two sisters, Gigi and Jackie, in a typical middle-class home. A few years ago, with my late father, I joined the Sons of the American Revolution. My forefather, William Garrett, was a member of the Virginia militia and served alongside General George Washington at Valley Forge.

My great-grandfather, Julian Peters, served with the Michigan infantry during the Civil War. I am proud to follow earlier generations of patriots who served their country and were prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice in defense of freedom and liberty. But like millions of Americans, I am also the son of an immigrant. America's shores were new to my mother, but they provided an incredible expanse of opportunity that people across the globe continue to dream of. My mother worked long hours as a nurse's aide and fought for a better workplace for herself and her coworkers, helping to organize her workplace and later serving as a union steward.

Michigan's strong labor movement and our manufacturing sector helped build economic opportunities for millions of Americans. Standing together to call for fair wages, safer workplaces,