

without logistics, and without supplies. It would be like us here in the Senate working without our staffs. We might be able to find a way to get our work done, but we wouldn't be as effective. And those at DHS who are required to come to work if a shutdown were to occur would not be paid until Congress restores funding. Essentially, a large part of our Federal homeland security efforts would be operating under an IOU.

A stopgap budget or a shutdown would also further degrade employee morale at the Department of Homeland Security. As many of us know, the Department continues to rank dead last—dead last—among all other large Federal agencies when it comes to workforce morale.

While Secretary Johnson, Deputy Secretary Mayorkas, and their team are taking important steps to make the agency a better place to work—and we are helping them—the Department still lacks a strong sense of cohesion and a sense of team. But Congress too has a responsibility. Providing this large and complex agency the funding it needs would be a terrific next step.

If my colleagues and I expect the Department of Homeland Security and other Federal agencies to show improved outcomes, we cannot continue to play games with their budgets and expect them to not feel the negative consequences. No business owner or manager could be expected to be effective and efficient under these conditions. The leadership of the Department of Homeland Security is no exception.

A clean Homeland Security funding bill for the rest of the fiscal year is the fiscally responsible step to take. If we deny them that funding, we will not be punishing the President. In a sense, we will be punishing a number of the employees. But most of all we will be punishing taxpayers because we are wasting their money and we are diminishing and reducing the kind of security they need in this country today.

Let me just say, don't take my word for this. Our good friend Tom Ridge, the first Secretary of Homeland Security and a former Republican Governor, with whom I served, said:

I would be very, very disappointed if I were Secretary, and the Democrats did it to me . . . It's pretty difficult to plan long term when you don't know exactly how much you're going to have available and what strings might be attached to it. Give them the funding they need.

And I would say to our Republican colleagues, give them the funding they need.

For these reasons, I urge our colleagues in the Senate to join me in doing the right thing in supporting passage of a clean full-year appropriations bill for the Department of Homeland Security and rejecting the amendments approved by the House. It would be irresponsible for us to continue kicking the can down the road when it comes to national security, and we cer-

tainly cannot afford to let this vital agency's funding run out.

I ask my colleagues to think about what we are trying to accomplish by failing to provide the Department of Homeland Security with the funds they need to operate. The American voters sent Congress a clear message on election day. This is what they said: They want us to work together. They want us to get things done. And they especially want us to enhance our economic recovery. Given recent events around the world, they also want us to do all we can to keep them and their families safe. We need to show Americans through our actions here in Washington that we have heard them.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, let me first thank Senator CARPER for his comments on the need for us to pass a homeland security appropriations bill.

I think our constituents would be surprised to learn that we have not passed an appropriations bill that funds for this fiscal year the Department of Homeland Security, a critically important agency that keeps us safe.

We know the challenges around the world. We know the challenges to our homeland. Yet we haven't passed a full-year Homeland Security bill. Instead, we have legislation that has come over from the House that is more interested in picking political fights on immigration policy—when we should be together on immigration policy—and holding up the funding for Homeland Security.

I thank Senator CARPER, who is the ranking Democrat on that committee, for bringing to our attention that the best thing for us to do is to take up the Shaheen-Mikulski bill, which is a clean reauthorization of the appropriations for this year, so we can get through this year, and then we can debate immigration on an immigration bill, debate next year's budget on a budget bill, and not have the politics of the House interfere with the funding for Homeland Security.

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION OF AUSCHWITZ AND BIRKENAU

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I take this time to bring to my colleagues' attention that January 27 represented the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and Birkenau—Auschwitz, the concentration camp that became a death camp; and Birkenau, a death camp, located in Poland, that was liberated by the Allied Forces on January 27, 1945.

There were 1.3 million Jews, Poles, and other minorities who were deported to Auschwitz and Birkenau between 1940 and 1945. Of that 1.3 million, 1.1 million died in these camps.

I had a chance in 2004 to visit both Auschwitz and Birkenau, and it was

emotionally draining. It was a site that is hard to imagine, to see the cruelty and the barbaric activities of humans against other humans. From looking at the rooms in which medical experiments were done on human beings, who ultimately died, to seeing the gas chambers, it very much affected my perspective on humanity and life.

In the United States we are blessed. I can practice my religion and don't have to fear losing my head. I can disagree with my government and know I am not going to be locked up for doing it. We should never take those liberties for granted. I think our freedoms give us a special responsibility to make sure that when we say never again, that it becomes a reality, that it becomes real.

We also have a responsibility to remember the victims of the Holocaust. In the Jewish religion, we have Yom Hashoah, a separate day set aside to recognize that. We need to learn from the survivors. I will always remember the times I had a chance to talk to Leo Bretholz. He was a constituent of mine who escaped the trains taking him to Auschwitz. He was an inspiration to all of us who learned more about the circumstances surrounding the Holocaust. Unfortunately, he passed away last year. Leo advocated for the repatriation of victims, particularly from the French railway SNCF, and we were ultimately successful in getting those funds.

This all underscores the importance of Holocaust education. When we say never again, let's always remember what happened over 70 years ago under Nazi rule. Let's have Holocaust education so young people understand the consequences of the cruelty and the consequences of not getting engaged.

Let's also help the survivors. I very much want to acknowledge that in the United States we have many survivors from the Holocaust, and over half of them live under the Federal poverty line. They are so fearful of being institutionalized, and we can understand that. I thank Senator MIKULSKI and the appropriators for putting money in the omnibus appropriations bill last year to help provide assistance so these survivors can get the services they are entitled to under our law. Sometimes they can't work their way through it. I was proud to help in those efforts.

I also thank Vice President BIDEN for his leadership in the Obama administration.

I thank those on the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee in the Older Americans Act reauthorization that was acted on this week because they include services for Holocaust survivors so that they will have easier access to government services.

Lastly, let me thank Senators MIKULSKI and KIRK. I joined both of them in a Senate resolution to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and Birkenau. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee that I serve on unanimously approved that resolution for consideration on

the Senate floor, and I thank Senators CORKER and MENENDEZ for their help.

As I think most Members of this body know, I have been an active participant in the Helsinki Commission. I am the democratic leader, working with Senator WICKER. The Helsinki Commission is known for its participation in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, but I think it is best known because we put a spotlight on human rights issues. We try to live up to that motto “never again.” We try to say we will not let violations of basic human rights go unchallenged.

So on this 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and Birkenau, which are the iconic symbols today of the Holocaust, let’s rededicate ourselves to making sure that “never again” becomes a reality.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise first to thank my colleague from Maryland for his eloquent words on the Holocaust and the survivors of the Holocaust and the compelling voices that came out of those death camps.

In addition, my colleague has always been a champion for human rights, whether it is on the Helsinki Commission, whether it is his advocacy to let Soviet Jews get out of the Soviet Union. Where people are repressed or facing attacks or persecution, he has always been on their side, and also actually meeting with the Holocaust survivors in our own community to bring a lot of attention to what we can do and to actually putting money in the Federal checkbook.

With all that effort at survival and making it to the United States, the survivors of the Holocaust, who were children then and would now be in their eighties and nineties—imagine that—should not live in poverty, they should not fear institutionalization, and they should not fear destitution. So I thank my colleague for his advocacy, and I look forward to working with him on this and also say “never again.”

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I come to the floor as the ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, and I come to ask my colleagues to bring to the floor and pass a clean Homeland Security appropriations bill for fiscal year 2015.

This isn’t just Senator BARB MIKULSKI calling for this but also the former heads of Homeland Security under President Bush and also under President Obama. The very first head of that agency, Gov. Tom Ridge, along with Mr. Chertoff and Janet Napolitano, have written to HARRY REID and MITCH MCCONNELL and said: Please, as former Secretaries of Homeland Security, we write to you today to respect-

fully request that you consider decoupling critical legislation to fund the Department of Homeland Security for fiscal year 2015 from a legislative response to President Obama’s actions on immigration.

They feel that:

... by tethering a bill to fund DHS in FY 2015 to a legislative response to the President’s executive actions on immigration ...

—it could lead to a shutdown of Homeland Security.

We don’t want a shutdown.

I won’t go through the entire letter. They conclude with:

It is imperative that we ensure that DHS is ready, willing, and able to protect the American people. To that end, we urge you not to risk the funding for the operations that protect every American and to pass a clean DHS funding bill.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

HON. MITCH MCCONNELL,
U.S. Senate Majority Leader,
Washington, DC.

HON. HARRY REID,
U.S. Senate Minority Leader,
Washington, DC.

As former U.S. Secretaries of Homeland Security, we write to you today to respectfully request that you consider decoupling critical legislation to fund the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 from a legislative response to President Obama’s executive actions on immigration.

As the recent terrorist attacks in Paris and the cyber-attacks on a major American corporation and on the U.S. Military’s Central Command remind us, the threats facing the U.S. are very real. The national security role that DHS plays, and by extension the funding that allows it to carry out its vital national security mission, is critical to ensuring that our nation is safe from harm. Funding for the DHS is used to protect our ports and our borders; to secure our air travel and cargo; to protect the federal government and our nation’s information, technology, and infrastructure from cyber-attacks; to fund essential law enforcement activities; to guard against violent extremists; to mobilize response networks after emergencies; and to ensure the safety of the president and national leaders.

Moreover, we appreciate that Congress possesses the authority to authorize and appropriate funds expended by the federal government. We do not question your desire to have a larger debate about the nation’s immigration laws. However, we cannot emphasize enough that the DHS’s responsibilities are much broader than its responsibility to oversee the federal immigration agencies and to protect our borders. And funding for the entire agency should not be put in jeopardy by the debate about immigration. The President has said very publicly that he will “oppose any legislative effort to undermine the executive actions that he” has taken on immigration. Therefore, by tethering a bill to fund DHS in FY 2015 to a legislative response to the President’s executive actions on immigration, the likelihood of a Department of Homeland Security shutdown increases.

It is imperative that we ensure that DHS is ready, willing, and able to protect the American people. To that end, we urge you not to risk funding for the operations that protect every American and to pass a clean DHS funding bill.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL CHERTOFF,
TOM RIDGE,
JANET NAPOLITANO.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, the Department of Homeland Security was established right after the terrible attack on the United States of America on September 11, 2001.

The Department of Homeland Security is a big agency, but protecting the homeland is a big job, and DHS employees are on the job every day: the Coast Guard safeguarding our waterways; Secret Service, not only protecting the President, the First Family, the Vice President, but also doing other important tasks; the Border Patrol and ICE—Immigration and Customs Enforcement—securing our borders against smugglers, traffickers, and other illegal immigrants; cyber warriors—people protecting us against bio and nuclear threats, and then also working with the first responders; FEMA—everything to protecting us in the event of an attack on the homeland, to having readiness and response and shelters and so on, to helping us now in hurricanes and blizzards such as we are facing in the northeast. It all helps State and local responders to have the resources they need to be able to respond at the local level.

The Firefighters Grant Program is so beloved in our communities where, through competitive exercise, they can go for grants to buy respiratory equipment, the new firetrucks and so on that they need. In my community, they can’t come up with this equipment on just fish fries and pancake breakfasts. We need a government on our side. Unfortunately, the Department of Homeland Security funding runs out on February 27.

Now let me give the background.

When we came back in September, facing the fact we had to have a continuing resolution to get us through the fiscal year and the election cycle, the Congress passed legislation, and then on December 13 when we did the omnibus, we passed an omnibus bill for every single agency with the exception of Homeland Security. So every single agency, from the Department of Defense to the Department of Health and Human Services, Education, the weather services, all of these important programs, NIH, were funded through the fiscal year. But we put Homeland Security on a CR because there was an intense and actually very prickly concern over the President’s Executive action on immigration. So rather than hold up the whole funding of the United States of America over temper tantrum politics over Obama’s Executive action on immigration, we went to a CR, a continuing resolution, on Homeland Security. The Homeland Security was to take us to February 27, where wiser heads—and now complete control by the Republican Party—would be able to move this for full funding.

So where are we? Well, during that time in December, as the chair of the