

we will see if Democrats are seriously prepared to filibuster this bill as well.

This bill would strengthen our national security. The bill would enhance our energy security. The bill would root out waste with smart targeted reductions so we can put that money to better use, funding more important infrastructure projects, more innovative energy research, and more critical safety improvements for our dams and waterways.

This bill is also critically important to our home States. Kentuckians would benefit from initiatives to protect the Ohio River shoreline, from cleanup work in Paducah, and from construction of the Olmstead Lock and Dam and other vital inland waterway projects.

Mr. President, this is a good bill. It deserves our support on the merits. It is good for our constituents and good for our country. That should be reason enough to support this funding bill. I would also remind my Democratic colleagues that 70 percent—70 percent—of the Democrats in committee did support the bill before us today.

SCHEDULE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, let me finally announce the schedule for today. At 12:45 p.m. there will be a cloture vote on the motion to proceed to the Energy and Water appropriations bill. That will be the last rollcall vote of the week.

RECOGNITION OF THE ASSISTANT MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, for the record, the Democratic leader, Senator REID, is attending a funeral this morning and I am standing in his stead.

First, I will address the comments from the majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL. I have to disagree with his opening that Democrats are not interested in funding the government, that Democrats are not interested in funding the Department of Defense. I may remind my friend from Kentucky, the Senator who is the Republican leader, that it was the Republican side that initiated the government shutdown 2 years ago. For 16 days the government was shut down in a vain attempt to protest the Affordable Care Act. Now that threat is before us again.

It is unfortunate we are facing this, but I don't believe it is fair to blame our side of the aisle for delay. You see, Mr. President, as early as June, we started saying we are facing an October 1 deadline, and we need to have a budget compromise, a budget negotiation. Why? Because there is a fundamental disagreement about funding our gov-

ernment in this fiscal year that began October 1.

The Republicans have argued to use wartime funds—\$38 billion worth—to supplement the Department of Defense. The leaders at the Department of Defense say this is the wrong approach. They cannot build a strong national defense with an injection of wartime funds which may or may not exist at the end of the process—may or may not exist next year.

I might add, coincidentally, that the Republicans failed—failed—to put additional funds in for nondefense spending. Some of it is related to national security—the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and so many agencies that keep us safe here in the United States. The failure of the Republicans to provide funds for critical agencies that provide health and education services is the reason we have reached an impasse in the budget negotiations.

It is why 3 months ago we on the Democratic side said to the Republicans: You are in charge. You are in the majority. But if we are going to have a process that ultimately succeeds, you need to engage on a bipartisan basis in this negotiation. They refused. They refused and they came up with a short-term spending bill—we call it a continuing resolution or CR—which takes us to the first or second week of December. Beyond that there is no certainty about what is going to happen.

The Senator from Kentucky talks about the appropriations process, where so many Senators voted for a bill and now are against it. I have been on appropriations committees in the House and the Senate for a long time. In the Senate we have an upside-down approach, where you vote on the overall bill first, then vote on amendments. In each of the cases the Senator from Kentucky refers to, many of us may have voted for the overall bill, hoping that amendments would solve the budget problems I have described. When those amendments failed to solve those budget problems, we said: This ultimate bill is not going to work, and we know it. That is the reality of the process in the Committee on Appropriations.

So in June we invited the Republicans to meet with the President and Democratic leaders to work out a budget compromise. There is an indication that some conversation is underway, but not enough.

Why have we reached this impasse? Frankly, it is because the Republican leadership—certainly in the House—is in disarray. Today there is going to be an election in the House of Representatives for a new Speaker. A group of ultraconservative Republican House Members were successful in ousting JOHN BOEHNER from the Speakership. Now they are going to try to replace him but with conditions. One of those conditions is, as printed in the paper this morning, that the new House

Speaker has to pledge to the Freedom Caucus—the tea party Republicans—that he will never, never agree to any compromise that is a bipartisan bill coming out of the Senate.

Now, how is that for a standard when you are trying to govern in this country—when you have a President of one party and the Congress in control of the other party? The Freedom Caucus says: Don't negotiate; don't compromise. That is a recipe for a shutdown, a sequestration, and a continuing resolution. Let me tell you what that does. If we get into a continuing resolution for next year—this year we are in, I should say—it is going to mean dramatic cuts in many agencies.

Yesterday the National Institutes of Health were called by Senator BLUNT, who chairs the appropriations subcommittee for that agency. We sat before Dr. Collins and his leading researchers for the United States of America, and we asked them: What happens if our budget process breaks down, if we go into sequestration, which is an across-the-board cut, or we go into a continuing resolution, which is a continuation of this year's budget? What happens at the premier medical research facility in the world, the National Institutes of Health? Dr. Collins told us in very honest and somber tones: It would mean that we would suspend research in areas like precision medicine, destined I think to save lives across the world. We would suspend brain research in areas like Alzheimer's disease.

Once every 67 seconds in America—once every 67 seconds—an American is diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Last year, we spent \$226 billion as a Federal Government in Medicare and Medicaid on Alzheimer's care. We estimate about the same number, over \$200 billion, was spent by families trying to care for those inflicted by dementia and Alzheimer's. There is a suggestion now that because our failure on budget negotiations will lead to the suspension of research, we would destroy any hope of finding a cure for this dreaded disease and scores of other diseases. That is how serious this conversation is. It is unfortunate that it has reached this point.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, when I was young and going to grade school, we feared the bomb. We were in a cold war. We were given duck-and-cover drills to get under our desk just in case there might be a nuclear attack on the United States of America. That is imprinted in my mind to this day—the fear which we had about this threat to our safety.

I wish to read a commentary that is making the rounds with wide circulation by a mother who talks about a similar concern for her children. She writes:

Two weeks ago, my second and fourth grade daughters came home from school and

told me they'd a "code red drill in case someone tries to kill us. We had to all hide in the bathroom together and be really quiet. It was really scary but the teacher said if there was a real man with a gun trying to find us, she'd cover us up and protect us from him. [Her little boy] started crying. I tried to be brave."

This mother goes on to write:

My 3-year-old nephew had the same drill at his preschool in Virginia. Three-year-old American babies and teachers—hiding in bathrooms, holding hands, preparing for death. We are saying to teachers: Arm yourselves and fight men with assault weapons because we are too cowardly to fight the gun lobby. We are saying to a terrified generation of American children—WE WILL NOT DO WHAT IT TAKES TO PROTECT YOU. WE WILL NOT EVEN TRY. So just be very quiet, hide and wait. Hold your breath. Shhh.

In the year 2013, the number of American police officers shot dead in the line of duty was 27—27, in 2013. In 2013, the number of preschoolers—that is, children under the age of 4—who were shot dead was 82; 27 American police officers, 82 children under the age of 4 were shot dead. We need to do better as a nation.

When I heard on the news this last Saturday that the monstrous tragedy in Oregon was the 45th—45th—school shooting this year in America, it broke my heart, and, more, it angered me.

In just a short while, in a few minutes, Members of the Senate Democratic caucus will come together outside of this building to talk about the need for America to take action to deal with gun violence. There are so many aspects of it.

I am honored to represent the city of Chicago, but having met with Mayor Rahm Emanuel yesterday, we have seen a 20-percent increase in gun violence and deaths this year, and in Milwaukee, a 100-percent increase over last year. In scores of other cities, there is the same phenomenon. The city of Chicago and many others will be flooded with guns.

When I met with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives in Chicago on Monday, I asked them: Where are all these guns coming from? And they told me they have analyzed the crime guns seized in the most violent areas of Chicago, and they found that 40 percent of those guns came from gun shows in Lake County, IN, just across the border from Chicago—40 percent of guns. We also know that we have a phenomenon where girlfriends and friends and family will go buy guns, because the criminal—the felon who wants to use those guns to terrorize and rob and kill—couldn't pass the test for purchasing a gun. It is known as a straw purchase. The girlfriend buys the gun and hands it over to the boyfriend who goes out and kills somebody. Well, there are things we can do to change this. We need to close the gun show loophole. It makes no sense that we don't even check the backgrounds of people who fill their trunks and their cars with firearms and ammunition at these gun shows. And yet when it comes to Federal li-

censed dealers, there has to be a background check. This gap in coverage accounts for 40 percent of the crime guns in the most dangerous neighborhoods in Chicago. So the gun show loophole needs to be closed.

We also need to make it clear that if you are going to make a straw purchase of a gun and do so for the purpose of giving it to someone who is going to use it in the commission of a crime, you will pay a heavy price for that, too.

I grew up in a family with a lot of members of my family owning firearms in downstate Illinois. It was common for families to go hunting, to go out for target practice, and there was a gun cabinet in most homes. When a little boy, sometimes a young girl, reached a certain age, they were taken out in a rite of passage to go hunting for the first time. It is a part of the culture where I grew up, and it is an acceptable part of the culture when those guns are used responsibly and safely.

I don't know a member of my family who would object to the following statement: No one who is a convicted felon or mentally unstable should be allowed to buy a gun in the United States. I don't know of a member of my family who would object to the notion that if you are going to buy a gun so someone you know can use it to commit a crime and kill someone, you are going to be punished. Those are the two things that we should start with when it comes to reducing gun violence. Those two provisions are not going to hurt any legitimate, responsible, legal gun owner. But they are going to keep guns out of the hands of those who would misuse them.

We have to restore some sense of order in this country, and we have to realize that when we reach the point that 3- and 4-year-olds are being killed in larger numbers each year by guns than even those brave men and women who serve in our police departments—when it has reached that point—clearly, Congress has to act. For Congress to act, we need to hear from the American people. If they share these feelings—if they share the feeling—we need to move forward as a nation and stop this senseless tragedy.

I hope that after we gather today on the floor, Members of the Senate will come together and talk about this issue, and that across America people will join us in this effort.

I yield the floor.

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. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

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 until 10:45 a.m., with the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that during this period, any time in a quorum call be equally divided between both sides before the vote.

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor as the ranking member of the Energy and Water Development Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee. In that capacity, I rise to oppose consideration of the fiscal year 2016 Energy and Water appropriations bill.

Let me be clear, I do this reluctantly.

In my view, this is a very good bill. Senator ALEXANDER and I have put forth a well-balanced bill within the allocation levels we were provided, which was a good level.

It has been a great pleasure for me over the years to work with Senator ALEXANDER. I have the utmost respect for him. We have always worked things out, but this year I think we have a bigger issue, and I wish to address that in my remarks.

First, 6 of the 12 appropriations subcommittees received base allocations lower than last year.

Another four subcommittees received nominal increases but were still forced to make cuts due to rising costs beyond their control.

That leaves only two subcommittees—Energy and Water Development and Homeland Security—that received real funding increases.

That is why I believe considering the Energy and Water bill in isolation as we are now, rather than debating larger funding issues, is misleading. That is why I can't support the motion to proceed to the bill.

We all know the vote today is not just about Energy and Water. It is about the entire appropriations process, and that is the debate we should be having.

Instead of debating just this specific bill, the debate should be focused on