

After dragging our feet for so many years, I am proud that the United States is acting domestically and leading internationally.

But our job is not done. The agreement in Paris puts the planet on a safer trajectory than the one we have been on, but we have to remain vigilant and build upon that success. Internationally, we have to hold other nations accountable, ensure that they commit to stronger emission reduction targets over time, and make sure that those reductions are transparent and verifiable. Domestically, we have to build on the success of our cities and our States, and we have to work to make sure that the Clean Power Plan and other emissions reduction policies are effective. As a member of the Senate energy committee, I intend to do just that.

Two years ago, my first grandchild was born, and I am expecting my second grandchild in January. God willing, they will live through this century and into the next. I want them to know that when we had the opportunity to put Earth on a safer path, we seized the moment.

So let's celebrate this agreement because it is an important milestone, and then let's build on it to make the planet a safer and more habitable place for our grandchildren and their children.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

OMNIBUS APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I am here today to talk a little about the bill we saw posted late last night—a bill that I think has better results than the process itself would have suggested we might have.

There is no question that we have to get back to the process of bringing these bills to the floor. Bring them to the floor one at a time and let everybody challenge every penny of spending, to spend it in a different way or don't spend it at all. I am disappointed, as every citizen in the country should be, that we didn't do it that way. I hope we have the opportunity next year to get back to where these bills are dealt with one at a time.

The other area I am disappointed in is the inability to use this bill to have the kinds of policy victories I would like to see. The rule on the waters of the United States—the courts consistently appear to be saying the EPA absolutely doesn't have the authority to do what they are trying to do. In my State, the fourth most dependent State on coal-powered utilities, the rule on electricity will double our utility bill

sometime between now and 2030, and for some Missourians, their utility bill will more than double. There is the rule that makes it difficult for financial advisers to give advice to small investors and people with small savings, small retirement accounts. If this financial adviser's rule—the so-called fiduciary rule—is allowed to go into effect, it will have dramatic impact. The joint employer rule upends the franchise model of doing business—a model of doing business which is around the world now but is uniquely American in its capacity to bring people into the middle class and allow them to rise into the middle class.

So I am disappointed about all of those things. But when we look at the bill as a spending bill, when we look at the bill as a bill that is supposed to do what this bill does, which is to decide how to spend the country's money, there is a significant reprioritization here.

One of the things I have seen even more in recent years than I think used to be the case is that when so many of our friends in the House and the Senate—and maybe even more so in the Senate—talk about how important it is to fund our priorities, what they are really staying is that it is important to fund anything any of us are for. That is not the way to set priorities. The way to set priorities is to decide what is important for the government to do, decide what the government can do better than people can do for themselves or maybe couldn't possibly do for themselves, and then set those priorities. In that case, I think this bill makes significant steps in the right direction, with dramatic changes in areas that had been a problem for several years now, at least the last 5 or 6 years, and in the case I want to talk about first, the last dozen years, but nobody has been able to do anything about it. Nobody has ever said those aren't our priorities; they just said: Well, we have all of these priorities—which meant every line in the appropriations bill, the best I can tell.

Let's talk about the Labor-HHS bill. It is about 32 percent of all the money after defense. If I have any time, I might talk about the Defense bill because it does great things for veterans, great things for cyber security, great things that support those who serve, and one of those things is encouraging our allies on the frontlines in the War on Terror.

In Labor and Education and particularly in Health and Human Services, the National Institutes of Health, where so much of our health care research is generated—a little of it is done in every State. Some States have great institutions. Certainly Missouri does—the University of Missouri, Columbia, Washington University, Children's Hospital. Hospitals all over our State have unique opportunities to do research. Health care research is something that, frankly, just isn't going to happen the way it should happen unless

the government steps forward and says: We are going to be a leader here.

From about 1996 until 2003, the Federal Government doubled NIH research—in less than a decade, doubled NIH research. Since 2003, there has been no increase. There has been no increase in over a decade. As that money didn't increase, the buying power of the money decreased. We can certainly argue there is somewhere in the neighborhood of 20 to 25 percent less buying power, so really in terms of what they are getting for research, there is less buying power by about 20 percent to 25 percent. Young researchers are frustrated at never getting that first grant, never getting the truly experimental grant to see if something will work that nobody may have thought of before.

This bill increases NIH research by almost 7 percent. It takes that \$30 billion Federal commitment to research and makes it a \$32 billion commitment. It begins the process of catching up. Why do we need to do that? What are the reasons we need to do that besides the fact that the government has done research of all kinds for a long time, from ag research, which I support, to health research, which I support? I can think right offhand of about three critical reasons we should be concerned about health research.

One is the individual impact that the failure to do this has had. As people live longer, more and more people die from Alzheimer's and its complications or cancer and its complications. Fewer people die from a heart attack because we have done great things there and can still do more through treatment and prevention to make heart attacks even less likely. But as people survive heart attack and stroke, they are more likely to die from Alzheimer's or cancer. This creates great stress for families, particularly Alzheimer's, which can create years and maybe decades of stress for families. So to try to prevent or postpone that, to work with families—I would say that is priority reason No. 1.

To save money for taxpayers would be priority reason No. 2. The projection is that by 2050, through Medicare, the Federal Government will be spending \$1 trillion a year on Alzheimer's and Alzheimer's-related health care. That is about as big as this discretionary budget. I think this budget is about \$1.15 trillion. So take all the money we are spending today on discretionary spending, and suddenly, in just a few decades, that is the same amount of money we will be spending because of Alzheimer's. So that is a good second reason.

A third reason is that health care is about to revolutionize everything from smart phone technology to the individual health care that is possible now that we know what we know about the human genome, the things we know about that make me as an individual different from everybody else and everybody else who is hearing this different from everybody else. What kind

of unique cure can we find? What kind of designer medicine cure can we find to solve a problem for you, and then how do we make that scalable so that, with minor variations, we can make the same thing possible and affordable for other people as well? And where that research is done—the smart phone technology applications, the focus on the brain, the focus on designer medicines—where that is done is likely to be where many of those jobs turn out to be. So certainly health care is and will continue to be a big economic driver. The multiplication of economic impact in a positive way with what we invest in health care is pretty dramatic. So that is a big increase.

Fighting opioid abuse—this is where people take prescription medicines. The Presiding Officer is a veteran, having just retired from her long military service. Many of those who serve are the most likely to have this problem because of injuries they sustained, accidents they were part of, attacks they were a victim of which create pain. So they take heavy amounts of appropriate things to ease that pain but then get addicted to it. This is an area people weren't talking about at all long ago, but deaths from prescription opioids have quadrupled since 1999—actually, more than that because they quadrupled between 1999 and 2013.

Overdose of prescription drugs costs the economy an estimated \$20 billion in work loss and health care costs every single year. The lives of families are impacted when a successful person, a responsible person, or someone who has not achieved either of those things yet but is a loved part of your family, becomes a victim of opioid abuse. We have a commitment in this budget to \$91 million. It is not the biggest line item in the budget, but it is almost three times what we have been spending.

Many of our Members have been real leaders in talking about this. Senator AYOTTE from New Hampshire, Senator PORTMAN from Ohio, and Senator SHAHEEN from New Hampshire are all very focused on this problem.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act benefits here as we move toward hopefully less Federal control on education but more ability to help local schools deal with people who have individual challenges.

Rural health is a big issue in my State and a big issue in the Presiding Officer's State. It is handled here in a different way.

Job training is an important thing we do.

But what do we not do here? This is my final addition to this: What are we not doing? We would have liked to have not funded over 40 programs, which was the bill that the Appropriations Committee sent to the floor months ago that was never debated. That would have been the chance to debate all 40 of those programs. I think there were 43 programs that cost about \$2.5 billion. Debate all 43 of those programs and de-

cide if the committee is right or not—we can't do that if we don't get it here on the floor. But we still eliminate 18 programs. Those programs currently were more than a quarter of a billion dollars of spending.

The President asked for 23 new programs that were \$1.16 billion of spending that were not done in this bill.

The Independent Payment Advisory Board under ObamaCare, where there would be a board rather than you and your doctor who decided what your health care is going to look like—that is not funded, so that won't occur. And there won't be a big transfer from other accounts with some other label to insurance companies, because all of the expectations from ObamaCare have turned out not to produce the kinds of results its supporters thought it would.

Hopefully we have made a big difference in how we prioritize the spending of the people's money, of the taxpayers' money, and hopefully we have also made a renewed commitment to do this the right way. We have done it this way since, frankly, the control of the Senate changed half a dozen years ago. The new majority was totally committed to getting these bills to the floor. They were all ready—all 12 bills—for first time in 6 years, most of them ready about the end of May, the first of June, but with only a couple of exceptions were they allowed to come to the floor, and that was at the very last minute when it was too late for this process to work the way it should.

Let's hope for more transparency, more debate, and more challenges. I am chair of this one committee I have been talking about today, but certainly there have to be other ideas that other Members who aren't on this subcommittee have, who aren't on the Appropriations Committee have. They do their best to get those ideas in by talking, in this late process and during the year, about what should happen.

Let's do our best to make this happen the way the Constitution envisions and the way people have every right to expect. I hope for a better process but realize that this process does significantly change the priorities the Federal Government has been stuck with for the last 6 years and heads in a new direction.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant 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.

COMPETITIVE SPACE LAUNCH

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the senior Senator from Arizona came to the floor this morning and raised a question about a provision in the Omnibus appropriations bill, particularly the aspect of it that related to the Depart-

ment of Defense. During the course of raising the issue, the senior Senator from Arizona used my name on the floor repeatedly. It was refreshing and I am relieved. The senior Senator from Arizona has not attacked me on the floor for 3 weeks, and I was fearful he was feeling under the weather, but clearly he is in fine form and feels good, and I welcome him back to the floor for another attack on me personally.

Let's talk about the issue he raised because it is complicated but extremely important when it comes to the defense of the United States. Here is what it boils down to: In the early 2000s, there were two companies making rockets that launched satellites. The two companies were Boeing and Lockheed, and they competed with one another, but in the early 2000s—and I don't understand why—they made an argument to the Department of Defense that the Nation would be better off if they merged the two companies into one company and then provided the rockets to launch satellites to defend the United States and collect information. They argued that if they worked together, it would cost less, and they merged. With the approval of the Department of Defense, they continued to bid on satellite launches.

What happened was a good thing and a thing that was not so good. What was good was that their product was very reliable. They launched satellites with great reliability, and that is of course what America and its national defense requires. The bad part is that the costs went through the roof. The costs went up about 65 percent over this period of time since they created United Launch Alliance, costing the Federal taxpayers about \$3 billion more for launches than it did in the past. They argued that they would eliminate competition and provide reliability, and they did, but the costs went up dramatically.

A new player arrived on the scene—SpaceX. SpaceX is associated with Elon Musk, a name that is well known in America. They decided to get into the business. They were going to build rockets and launch satellites too. Naturally, the United States of America said: Be my guest but prove you can do it in a way that we can count on you, because when we need a satellite launched to collect information, we want to make sure it is successful.

Over the years, SpaceX improved, evolved, and developed the capacity to launch satellites to the point where NASA, for example—the National Aeronautics and Space Administration—used SpaceX rockets successfully. It reached a point where the Department of Defense said to SpaceX: You are capable and will be certified to now compete for Department of Defense business. It is to the credit of SpaceX that they reached that point.

I thought this was an exciting development because, once again, we were going to have competition between the United Launch Alliance, the old Boeing-Lockheed merger, and SpaceX, the