listening. If we want a debate on immigration, let's have it. I am anxious to tell the story of Herta and many others and to appeal to my colleagues on a bipartisan basis to come up with sensible immigration reform. But let us not withhold funding from this critical agency while we are embroiled in this political squabble.

I yield the floor.

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 for up to 10 minutes, with the Democrats controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half.

The Senator from Illinois.

CARTER NOMINATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise to express my support for the President's nominee, Dr. Ashton Carter, to serve as our Nation's 25th Secretary of Defense.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE CHUCK HAGEL

Let me first say a few words of thanks to Chuck Hagel, our former colleague in the Senate, who has served as Secretary of Defense. He is a friend, he has had a long career in public service, and he is a veteran of Vietnam. The people of Nebraska rewarded him by asking him to represent them in the United States Senate.

As our Nation's first person of enlisted rank to serve as Secretary of Defense, he had a unique, ground-level view on matters of war and peace, and a strong commitment to our troops. I thank Chuck Hagel for his service and his family for their sacrifices over the last 2 years.

Dr. Carter has an impressive and distinguished record of service as well in government, as an adviser and as a scholar. He has what it takes to be a great Secretary of Defense.

His credentials as one of our Nation's top security policy experts are well established. He earned a bachelor's degree in physics and medieval history from Yale and his doctorate in theoretical physics from Oxford. He has served as faculty chair at Harvard and is the author of 11 books.

As singularly impressive as this is, Dr. Carter is also very much a doer. He has served no fewer than 11 Secretaries of Defense, including Leon Panetta and Chuck Hagel. He has four times been awarded the Department's Distinguished Service Medal, as well as the Defense Intelligence Medal.

As an assistant secretary during the Clinton administration, he was instrumental in removing nuclear stockpiles from the former Soviet states of Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus.

As Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, he was renowned for breaking through bureaucratic logjams to get our troops what they needed, when they needed it. We talked about this at some length when we met in my office a few weeks ago. How can we continue, I asked him, to reform DOD so that it will be able to rise to the occasion of today's challenges?

As part of the discussion, I was pleased to hear his appreciation for the organic industrial base of the Department of Defense, especially one near and dear to my heart, the Rock Island Arsenal in Illinois.

He recalled his experience in Afghanistan as he tried to bring our troops the body armor and armored humvees they needed. He also recalled working alongside the great dedicated employees at the Rock Island Arsenal as they delivered the necessary lifesaving equipment to our troops and rolled it off their assembly lines in record time.

I am confident Dr. Carter can steer the Department of Defense through difficult times and provide the President with the best policy advice to deal with our Nation's challenges. He has my full support.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, while I am pleased the Senate is moving, and moving quickly, on Ashton Carter, I am troubled that my colleagues across the aisle are delaying consideration of Loretta Lynch, the President's nominee for Attorney General of the United States. It has been 96 days since the President announced the nomination. This is longer than any other Attorney General nominee has had to wait in recent memory. By way of comparison, the Democratic-controlled Senate confirmed Michael Mukasey as Attorney General in 53 days, Eric Holder in 64 days.

I sat through the hearings with Loretta Lynch, and I listened to the questions, particularly from the Republican side, because most all Democrats I know of are supporting her. I listened to the questions on the Republican side and I came to the inescapable conclusion that Republican Senators were going to refuse any effort to renominate Eric Holder for Attorney General. That is all they had to say. Their grievance was with the sitting Attorney General, who has announced he is leaving as soon as his successor is chosen. I listened carefully for any criticism of Loretta Lynch and I didn't hear it.

Then they had the panel of public witnesses. That is a panel that has a majority of Republican-chosen witnesses and Democratic witnesses. Early on, I believe Senator LEAHY asked the question of all the witnesses there: How many of you who are on this public panel oppose the nomination of Loretta Lynch for Attorney General? Not one—not one Republican, not one Democrat. There is no opposition to Loretta Lynch.

Why are they holding up this important appointment by President Obama? Why don't we consider that this afternoon? It can be done, and it should be done very quickly.

Nobody has questioned her record as a Federal prosecutor. She has twice before been unanimously confirmed to serve as U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York. She has been vetted and examined and questioned to a fare-thee-well. She testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee for nearly 8 hours, answering every question, including 600 written questions that were sent to her.

It is time to move forward and confirm this obviously well-qualified and historic nominee.

The Senate Judiciary Committee will have the opportunity to report Ms. Lynch out this week. We have the opportunity to confirm her immediately. There is no reason for further delay. What are the Senate Republicans trying to prove by holding up an obviously qualified nominee for a critically important agency such as the Department of Justice?

I hope the spirit of bipartisanship shown in that committee can be shown on the floor of the Senate.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes.

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

AUMF

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, to her high school classmates it was pretty clear what kind of person Kayla Mueller was going to turn out to be. As a teenager she took up the causes of the disenfranchised and the dispossessed, such as when she joined a campaign to stop the city of Flagstaff from using recycled wastewater to make snow on a set of peaks the Hopi people considered to be sacred. She later went to the most dangerous place on Earth because people there needed help. She saw suffering on an unimaginable scale, brought on by a vicious civil war inside Syria and Iraq, and she wanted to make it better.

No one is responsible for her death except for ISIL. They killed her, as they did James Foley, Steven Sotloff, Abdul-Rahman, Peter Kassig, and thousands of individual innocent Iraqis and Syrians over the course of the last year.

It has been a long time since the world has seen such evil. This is a brutal inhuman terrorist organization

that today is a threat to the region in which they prowl, but without question could pose a threat to the United States if their march is allowed to go unchecked.

Like the Presiding Officer, every time I hear of a new attack or a new execution carried out by ISIL, my blood boils, I get furious, and I commit myself to doing everything within our power to stamp them out. But I also remember that as justified a response as it is, fury is not a strategy; revenge is not security.

If we are going to defeat ISIL, we need to act with our heads, not just with our hearts. And that means Congress needs to pass a war authorization that includes a strategy for victory—a strategy that learns from a small little creature called the planarian flatworm. I want to tell you about flatworms for a second. This is going to sound a little strange, but I will bring it back here.

These flatworms are extraordinary little things that live in ponds, under logs, and in moist soil. What is amazing about these flatworms is that if you split one of them in two, if you cut it in half, both halves regenerate into new flatworms. In fact, if you cut it into four pieces, all four pieces can regrow into new flatworms. It means if for whatever reason you are trying to get rid of flatworms, cutting them into pieces does more harm than good. If you take a knife to it, you actually create more flatworms than you destroy.

So why am I talking about this? Because they are a perfect object lesson of the simple truth that if you attack a problem the wrong way, you might not just leave the problem unsolved, you might actually make it worse. If you use the wrong tool to try to eradicate flatworms, you just end up with a lot more of them.

In the wake of the 2003 invasion of Iraq, we were told we were going to be treated as liberators. We were told we would be out of Iraq in a few years. When that failed, our invasion turned the one-headed monster of Saddam Hussein into a two-headed monster of competing Sunni and Shiite insurgencies.

Then we were told more troops would do the trick. And it worked, for only as long as tens of thousands of Americans were patrolling the sands of Iraq. But ultimately our occupation was quietly breeding a new brand of an even more lethal insurgency, one that turned into the terrorist group we are fighting today.

Put simply, ISIL in its current form would not exist if we had not put massive ground troops into the region in the first place. Our presence in Iraq, our mishandling of the occupation, became bulletin board material for terrorist recruiters. Iraq became, in the CIA's words, the ''cause celebre'' of the international extremist network. We killed a terrorist, and the next day two more showed up.

Let me be clear, because I don't want people to twist my words here. America is not responsible for this evil ideology, and our troops are not to blame for ISIL. No one forgets that Al Qaeda attacked us and killed 3,000 of our people before we invaded Iraq. But do we believe having hundreds of thousands of U.S. soldiers occupying territory in the Middle East since then has succeeded in making us safer?

We have killed a lot of terrorists over the last 13 years, and yet there are more of them, in more places, with an even more radical agenda today than ever before.

Former Defense Secretary Bob Gates understood the lesson of the flatworm when he said, upon his departure from the Department of Defense, any future Secretary who proposed putting ground troops back into the Middle East should ''have their head examined.''

So for me, as we debate this new war authorization against ISIL, I have a bottom line: We cannot authorize a strategy that could result in American combat troops going back to the Middle East.

If this President or the next President puts our soldiers into the Middle East to fight ISIL, they would serve with bravery and honor. But an intervention of this scale would ultimately create more terrorists than it destroyed. And to the extent we drove back ISIL, it would only be temporary, lasting only as long as our troops were there.

Why? These extremist groups such as ISIL exist not because of a military vacuum but because of a political and an economic vacuum. They prey upon disenfranchised young men who see no future for themselves in societies with massive, crippling hunger, poverty, and destitution.

These groups work best when autocratic or sectarian governments marginalize and dispossess specific ethnic or religious groups, pushing them into the arms of extremists who pledge to fight the corrupt and dehumanizing status quo.

Foreign ground troops do nothing to address these underlying issues. But worse, more often than not, foreign ground troops exacerbate these motivating forces. Bloody ground wars make more economic dislocation, not less. Foreign occupations often empower divisive local leadership, such as the former Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Malaki, who pushed people toward—not away from—extremist groups. Then groups such as Al Qaeda and ISIL use this misery to brainwash young men into believing America is to blame, that we are the enemy they are yearning to fight.

That doesn't mean there isn't a role for military force in the Middle East. I have voted for an authorization in the Foreign Relations Committee that allows for the United States—our military—to go in and kill terrorists, but we simply need to understand that ultimately what military force is in the Middle East is a shaping mechanism to give us space in order to achieve the political and economic reform on the ground with our local partners such that those root causes of terrorists disappear.

American military force is useful in this fight, but it has limits. There is a decreasing marginal return and then a point where it actually flips on its head and begins to actually create more of the people we are seeking to destroy.

I have heard two arguments over the past few days as to why this AUMF shouldn't have a limitation on ground troops. First, some of my Republican friends say this kind of prohibition on ground troops would be unwise because it would telegraph to our enemies a critical tactical limitation. My response: Good.

Why do we think ISIL puts up these execution videos? Because they know the best long-term play for their desired caliphate is predicated on the United States making a mistake and rejoining a ground war in the Middle East. Recent history has taught ISIL that the best tool by far to recruit terrorists—and estimates are there are as many as 20,000 foreign fighters who have joined ISIL—is the U.S. Army in the Middle East. Thus, I have no problem being transparent with our enemy by signaling this to them; that we are going to learn from our mistakes and we are going to fight this war with tools that result in victory, not defeat.

The second argument I hear is that Congress would be overstepping our constitutional bounds by limiting the power of the President to prosecute a war. But first let's note that over and over again, starting with Congress's very first authorizations of military force passed in early American times, we have put restrictions consistently on war declarations and AUMFs. Most recently, Republicans and Democrats in the Foreign Relations Committee voted to put some pretty serious limitations on our authorization for the use of military force in Syria in the wake of chemical weapons usage. Frankly, regardless of the precedent, I would argue Congress has a constitutional responsibility to help set the strategy for war, to help guide the Nation's foreign policy.

Let's be honest. This AUMF is going to go on for 3 years, according to the limitations the President proposed, well into the next President's term. As someone who believes combat troops in the Middle East would be a mistake, I simply can't rely on President Obama's promise that he will not use ground troops against ISIL because he only has 2 more years left, and many leading Republicans have made it perfectly clear they would push a President from their party, if that is who comes next, to put troops back into the fight against ISIL. As an elected representative of the people I serve, I should get a say as to whether we have learned from our mistakes of the past 10 years.

I remember my first visit to Iraq. I was there in the bloody spring of 2007. I remember being absolutely blown

away by the capability and the bravery and the capacity of the young U.S. soldiers whom I met in places such as Baghdad, Tikrit, and Baiji. So I can understand why it is easy for some people to believe there is no enemy our soldiers can't beat, that there is no challenge they can't meet, that there is no threat they can't eliminate. I believe in American exceptionalism in my heart, but I don't think it allows us to ignore history, to avoid facts, to deny reality, and the reality is extremists in some parts of the world are like flatworms. If we come at them with the wrong weapon, we may kill one, but we will create two more.

I am pleased the Senate is finally able to debate a new war against ISIL. This debate is past due. ISIL needs to be defeated, and we deserve to honor the U.S. Constitution and step up to the plate and debate an authorization.

Make no mistake, we should pass an AUMF. ISIL is evil personified, but for us to beat them, we need an AUMF that makes it totally clear we will not simply repeat the mistakes of the past that got us into this mess in the first place.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, what is the status of the floor debate and how much time might I have?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democrats have 8 minutes remaining.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for 10 minutes.

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

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I have come to the floor, with just 16 days left until the Department of Homeland Security shuts down, to again call for Congress to pass a clean full-year bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security. With our Nation facing very real and very dangerous threats—Senator MURPHY was just on the floor talking about the ISIL threat and pointed out what the risks are—it is time for us to put politics aside and do what is right for the security of our Nation.

If we don't pass a full-year bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security, we will not be able to make critical investments in border security, maritime security, and in nuclear detection activities.

If we don't pass a full-year bill, grants to protect our cities and our ports from terror attacks would be halted, and new grants to police and firefighters will not be awarded. If we don't pass a full-year bill, we are short-changing counterterrorism efforts, and we will put our Nation's cyber networks at risk.

Senator MIKULSKI and I have filed a clean, full-year funding bill that is on the Senate calendar and ready for action. Our bill fully funds these key security priorities, but if our colleagues on the other side of the aisle don't want to support a bill that Senator MIKULSKI and I have filed, certainly we can support a clean Republican bill that includes the funding for the Department of Homeland Security.

Our bill—our clean bill—is based on the bicameral, bipartisan agreement that was reached in December by Senator MIKULSKI and Congressman HAL ROGERS. The legislation was agreed to by Democrats and Republicans, and it was the result of bipartisan, compromised negotiations. Not everyone got what they wanted in the bill, but it is a good budget that strengthens our Nation and protects against the many threats we face.

Appropriations bills are only possible because of the art of compromise. Senators from both parties identify priorities important to them or their States. They work with Members of the Appropriations Committee on bill language, funding priorities. Everyone works together to influence the final product. All Senators have the opportunity to participate in crafting appropriations bills.

In fact, there doesn't seem to be any disagreement about the funding and how it is allocated in the appropriations bill before us, in the funding bill for Homeland Security. Senator COCHRAN, who chairs the Appropriations Committee, came to the floor and touted all of the benefits in the funding bill for Homeland Security. Senator HOEVEN, who chairs the Subcommittee on Homeland Security that I am the ranking member of, came to the floor and, similar to Senator COCHRAN, touted what is on the bill. I have been on the floor, Senator MIKULSKI has been to the floor many times to talk about what is in the funding bill for the Department of Homeland Security and why we need to pass it.

This morning I wish to highlight a few more of the priorities in a clean, full-year bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security, priorities that will be at risk if we can't pass a clean bill.

There is bipartisan support that the Homeland Security appropriations bill includes strong funding for fire and SAFER grants. I know the Presiding Officer understands these programs because he has been the Governor of his home State. So he knows how important those fire and SAFER grants are to local fire departments, to first responders because they help purchase new equipment, they help with training exercises, and they can help fire departments cut down response times and save lives.

There is also bipartisan support that the Homeland Security funding bill include grants to help our Nation's largest cities protect against terror attacks. There is funding for port security grants, State and local law enforcement grants, emergency preparedness grants. There is bipartisan support for funding to upgrade the FEMA Center for Domestic Preparedness in Anniston, AL.

There is a compromise most of the people on the Democratic side of the aisle didn't agree with, to deny President Obama's request to increase air passenger fees and reinstitute the air carrier security fee.

The Coast Guard needs to continue the acquisition of its eighth national security cutter, which is so important for our maritime security. Republicans and Democrats secured $627 million in the bill for the cutter.

We have all seen how devastating the attacks were against Sony when it was hacked. Cyber attacks are an area of security that former National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft called ''as dangerous as nuclear weapons.'' That is why Republicans and Democrats pushed for full funding for DHS cyber security activities.

The increase to the southwestern border of unaccompanied children and families last year is a major concern for States along our southern border—States such as Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico. It has been a key priority for a number of my Republican colleagues, and for all of us who are concerned about border security, to meet the statutory mandate of 34,000 detention beds for undocumented immigrants that is required for the Department of Homeland Security.

The clean funding bill includes support for those 34,000 detention beds, and it also includes funding to meet Republican requests to build 3,000 new family detention beds in Texas.

The National Bio and Agro-Defense facility construction in Manhattan, KS, which is an effort to help us deal with threats against our food supply and other bioterrorism threats—in a clean funding bill will receive the final amount needed to begin construction.

Senator ROBERTS and I talked about this today. One of the things he pointed out is he has been working on this project for 16 years. There is $300 million in this clean, full-year bill. If we don't pass this bill, if the Department of Homeland Security shuts down, if we are in a continuing resolution, then this funding is at risk and they may have to rebid the project, which will drive up costs. That makes no sense.

There was bipartisan agreement to include $12 million for the National Computer Forensics Institute in Hoover, AL, to support the expansion of basic and advanced training for State and local law enforcement personnel, judges, and prosecutors to combat cyber crime.

These important investments in counterterrorism and cyber and border security are not controversial. That is not what we are arguing about here. We are arguing about whether we are