

trade deficit with China today? Pushing \$400 billion. Our trade deficit went up 6 percent again last year.

So who is right here: The American people, who are worried about their jobs, their wages, their incomes, or the experts who promised all these grand things if we would just sign these agreements and everybody is going to be better off for it? I think the American people are the ones who have been proven right by this data.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have 1 additional minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, the President does not need to be threatening our allies in Britain about the decision of their own people on whether to exit from the European Union. They are not happy with how things are going in the European Union. A lot of people are concerned about it. It is heading toward a close vote. The people of the United Kingdom can make their own decision without hearing advice or threats from the President of the United States. I don't blame them for being offended by it. This is certainly not an acceptable position for the President to take.

Madam President, I appreciate the opportunity to share these remarks. I want to push back from the President's recent statements about this trade agreement, how he plans to move it through when people aren't watching. I also think Congress needs to speak and assert that we affirm the right of the people of the UK to decide whether to remain in the European Union.

I thank the Chair.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

#### F-35 JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I rise today in support of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter. I have previously addressed this body on the progress of the F-35 program and its importance to our national defense. On one of those occasions, I stated that this weapons system provides the capabilities we need to protect our freedoms and those of our allies. That statement resonates even more today as the international security landscape grows even more precarious.

When the F-35 program started over 20 years ago, the strategic backdrop for the program of record was significantly different than it is today. The Cold War had recently drawn to a close, and the menace of Islamic extremists, rogue states, and nonstate actors was just beginning to surface. Today, these groups pose the most salient threat to our national security—and we all know it. To find examples of their deviant behavior, look no further than the headlines of today's papers.

In Eastern Europe, Putin's invasion of a sovereign nation threatens not only the security of the Ukrainian people but also tests the resolve of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization—perhaps our country's most important defense alliance.

In the Middle East, Iran grows more emboldened with its ballistic missile tests, rattling a region already on the verge of violent conflict. And none of this is to mention the metastasis of ISIS in Iraq and a seemingly endless civil war in Syria.

In Asia, the North Korean regime constantly threatens South Korea with war. Meanwhile, tensions over territorial waters in the South China Sea grow more strained, escalating the possibility of conflict between China and our Asian allies. All the while, China continues to leverage its economic largesse to build highly advanced weapons systems.

I believe many Members of this body would agree that the dangers facing our country today are more immediate and far-reaching than they were just 20 years ago.

As threats to our national security proliferate across the globe, we need a next-generation weapon system of unparalleled capability. We need a strike fighter powerful enough to deter the aggression of our foes. We need an aircraft that can penetrate advanced enemy air defenses and neutralize targets on the ground. In short, we need the F-35.

In fact, we need the F-35 today more than ever. Even so, there are those who seek to reduce or delay the number of F-35s being produced. I strongly advise against this action. Reducing procurement numbers for the F-35 will only make the aircraft more expensive in the long run.

To ensure that our country continues to dominate airpower for decades to come, we must stay the course and resist the urge to cut aircraft. That is why I believe we must increase, not decrease, the number of F-35s scheduled for production.

Recently, several of my colleagues, led by Senators CORNYN and SHAHEEN, sent a letter to the Armed Services Committee and the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee in both the House and the Senate. Their letter was clear: The need for the F-35 in today's environment is crucial. Therefore, the committees of jurisdiction should not follow the President's budget reduction plan but should maintain the program of record.

I realize the frustrations that many of my colleagues have with the acquisition process of the Department of Defense. During the first two decades of the F-35's journey, the Joint Strike Fighter Program Office experienced its fair share of setbacks, broken promises, missteps, and faulty leadership decisions—decisions made by both government leaders and industry partners. Even from within the Pentagon itself, we have heard the title of "acquisition

malpractice" bestowed upon this program at the highest levels after the Nunn-McCurdy breach for cost growth.

Time and again, my much esteemed colleague, the senior Senator from Arizona, has pointed out these shortfalls and missteps. I echo his frustrations and stress the need for an acquisition and sustainment strategy that focuses on delivering and sustaining the most available, capable, and affordable weapon systems for the warfighter.

Nevertheless, we must recognize that reducing procurement numbers for the F-35 will only put an unnecessary strain on our Armed Forces. Given the dangerous state of global affairs, now is not the time to hamstring our military's capabilities.

Amid the many criticisms of the F-35 program, I wish to call attention to its successes. In terms of both capability and performance, the F-35 program has made tremendous strides. On the affordability front, the price of each F-35 has dropped dramatically over the past 5 years to under \$100 million per aircraft. This trend is expected to continue for at least the next 5 years in order to achieve a flyaway cost of \$85 million per aircraft by 2019.

In an affordability and capability sense, the F-35 is a bargain, but in addition to being a bargain, the F-35 is also an indispensable asset to our defense arsenal. The F-35 has the ability to destroy some of the most advanced air-to-air and air-to-ground systems in existence today. Many of these systems are being developed by the Russians and the Chinese. The F-35's stealth technology, advanced sensors, and weapons allow it to defeat those integrated air-defense environments. That is to our advantage, no question about it.

Currently, even the most advanced versions of the F-16 and F/A-18 would be hard-pressed to defeat such threats alone. That is why we need the F-35. With the F-35, we can maintain our ability to strike any target anywhere in the world.

The F-35 is not only a tremendous strike aircraft, but it is also a war-winning dogfighter. In fact, when facing legacy aircraft such as the F-16 and F/A-18 in air-to-air combat scenarios, the F-35 consistently wins these engagements. The aircraft's combination of stealth, maneuverability, and superior battlespace awareness allows the F-35 to enter the fight against legacy aircraft with a great advantage. If you ask our Marine, Navy, and Air Force pilots flying this aircraft today, they will tell you what they told me: This is the best fighter aircraft they have ever flown and the plane they want to take into battle above all others.

This conclusion is shared not just by American pilots who have flown the aircraft, but also by our allies who have chosen to purchase the F-35 out of a wide variety of aircraft that are currently available in other countries as well.

As the Israeli Defense Minister recently said, "I'm very happy that we'll

know how to preserve the qualitative military edge of the Israeli Defense Forces and of the Israeli Air Force through acquisition of this important plane.”

Military might is useful only if three things occur: One, the capability is present to counter and engage the threat; two, the capacity and numbers are present for all of the threats; and three, those in power have the resolve to use them to protect the sovereignty of our Nation and its citizens.

The current demand on our military requires every ounce of capability made available by advanced weapon systems and, just as important, the numbers needed to counter threats the globe over.

Consider how in the past we chose to reduce the number of F-22 advanced fighters made available to combatant commanders. Originally, the program of record for the F-22 was 750 aircraft, yet we procured only 195. Today, the demand for the F-22 and its capabilities dwarfs the available jets in the inventory. In hindsight, we should have bought 1,000.

Similar situations have also occurred with the B-2 bomber, the C-17 transport, and numerous other aircraft. The lesson is clear: The program of record for 1,763 F-35 A models for the Air Force and 680 B and C models for the Navy and Marine Corps have to materialize and be realized. The committees of jurisdiction should also insist to the Department that the F-35 Joint Program Office also acquire the spare parts needed to sustain the numbers and accelerate that purchase to ensure that F-35s are sustained at the level of readiness demanded by the current world dynamic. As the old adage goes, if we do not learn from history, then we are doomed to repeat it.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

#### ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2028, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2028) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Alexander/Feinstein amendment No. 3801, in the nature of a substitute.

Alexander amendment No. 3804 (to amendment No. 3801), to modify provisions relating to Nuclear Regulatory Commission fees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

#### GAO REPORT

Mr. COATS. Madam President, it is the beginning of the appropriations season here in Washington. I am glad we are doing that. We are a little bit ahead of schedule from past experiences, although we haven't been doing appropriations bills during my second term in the Senate. I am glad we are doing them because that is really what we are here for.

For those listening, this is for when Congress determines how we spend taxpayer money. There are a number of people in the gallery today—they are all taxpayers—wondering: Where does this money that is sent to Washington go?

When Hoosiers from Indiana send their hard-earned tax dollars to Washington to be spent by the Federal Government, they expect their elected leaders to be good stewards of their resources. After all, they worked hard to earn this money. Before they get their net paycheck, their taxes are deducted and sent to Washington. They have every right to expect us to be good stewards.

It is no wonder taxpayers are furious with Washington when the Federal Government wastes the money they work so hard to make. When they hear about or read about some of the ludicrous ways we spend their money or the wasteful ways we spend their money, they have every reason to be concerned and to be angry.

Clearly, there are essential functions the Federal Government has to undertake, but we can't continue to ignore the fact that our national debt has now passed \$19 trillion. Borrowing money in order to pay for expenditures and then having obligations to pay that money back, along with interest rates, puts us in a very deep hole that we have talked about a lot, but we have not done what is necessary to address this continued plunge into debt.

Seemingly every day, we see examples of mismanagement and wasteful spending in Washington, which is one of the reasons I give my weekly “Waste of the Week” addresses. I have come to the floor now more than 40 times in this Congress to talk about documented cases of waste, fraud, and abuse within the Federal Government. It is not something made up but documented abuses by, generally, the Government Accountability Office, whose job is to examine how we spend our money and to publicize how that money is spent.

Now we have racked up nearly \$160 billion of documented waste, fraud, and abuse. This has included the ridiculous, such as Federal grant spending on rabbit massages, as well as the serious, such as double-dipping in the Social Security Disability Insurance funds.

While many Americans struggle every day to pay their mortgage or to put food on the table, it is infuriating that the Federal Government is wasting money renting empty warehouses or funding a study to determine if being “hangry” is a real thing.

I talked about the word “hangry” in one of my speeches several weeks ago. “Hangry” is a modification of the words hungry and angry. A considerable amount of taxpayer money was spent on a study to determine if a person gets angrier with their spouse when he or she is hungry and so they coined the word “hangry.” It refers to someone who is hungry, and because they are hungry, they get a little anxious or a little difficult to live with. This study determined and came to the conclusion that, yes, if you are hungry, you tend to be a little bit angry and you tend to take it out on the person nearest to you, who is usually your spouse.

I think any of us could have come up with that conclusion without spending \$400,000 or so in order to determine that that is the case. The word “hangry” has now been added to Webster's dictionary. You can look it up. How can we spend \$400,000 of the taxpayer's money to do this study when people are having trouble paying their bills, their mortgage, or saving money so they can send their kids to school? This is the kind of thing that infuriates the American people. This is the kind of thing that has put our approval ratings in single digits. This is the kind of thing that causes people to say that Washington needs to be shaken up. Why do we keep taking the American people's hard-earned tax dollars and spending them on things like this?

Many Americans struggle every day to put food on the table and pay their mortgage. It is infuriating to them that the Federal Government is wasting money doing these kind of things. Eliminating this wasteful spending can go a long way to restoring trust in Washington, and it needs to start now. That is why, as I said, the studies by the government's only watchdog agency, the Government Accountability Office, are so important to the work we do here.

The GAO, or the Government Accountability Office, just released its “2016 Annual Report” on additional opportunities to reduce fragmentation, overlap, and duplication. The GAO report presents 92 new actions we can take—either the Congress or the administration—to improve government efficiency and effectiveness to achieve cost savings. This report and some of its findings include programs I already talked about, such as the failed advanced technology vehicles program I highlighted last week. Unfortunately, in an amendment I offered here on the floor, we came up short with a vote of 48 to 49, but we raised the awareness of a program that is sitting on nearly \$4 billion of unspent money. Of the five proposals that were released—money