

## FOOD PRICES AND LABELING

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday, the top Republican and the top Democrat from the Agriculture Committee came to the floor to talk about the compromise bill that would protect middle-class families from unnecessary and unfair higher food prices while also ensuring access to more information about the food they purchase.

Chairman ROBERTS said this bipartisan bill will benefit consumers “by greatly increasing the amount of food information at their fingertips” while avoiding “devastating increases in the price of food.”

Ranking Member STABENOW noted that it will “prevent a confusing patchwork of 50 different labeling requirements in 50 different States,” and it “recognize[s] the scientific consensus that biotechnology is safe.”

It is the result of bipartisan work to address an issue that could negatively harm consumers and producers. We could actually pass it today.

SANCTUARY CITY POLICY  
LEGISLATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, we all know that so-called sanctuary city policies are extreme. They undermine the safety of our communities. They can inflict incredible pain on innocent victims and their families. President Obama’s own Secretary of Homeland Security has called such policies “not acceptable” and “counterproductive to public safety.”

Yet Democrats voted to block two proposals that would have worked to prevent so-called sanctuary city policies from existing in the first place and would have enhanced penalties to keep more criminals off our streets when cities refuse to do away with such policies.

Senator TOOMEY offered one of them, the Stop Dangerous Sanctuary Cities Act, which he described this way:

My legislation stands for the simple proposition that the safety of the American people matters. The life of Kate Steinle matters. Protecting our neighborhoods from violent criminals and terrorists matters.

Senator TOOMEY’s bill would have ensured more fairness for citizens and governments that do the right thing. It would have supported police officers, who risk everything for our safety, and it enjoyed critical support from several law enforcement organizations.

Democrats again chose partisan politics over making a difference for the American people.

I know Senator TOOMEY won’t be deterred. I know he will continue his work to do something about this issue. He has been an outspoken leader against the dangerous and extreme policies of sanctuary cities for some time now. I thank him for his leadership on this issue and his tireless work to advance this measure.

I also recognize Senator CRUZ for his legislation, Kate’s Law, which would have helped protect the public even

when jurisdictions continue to follow so-called sanctuary city policies by putting more dangerous criminals behind bars and off our streets.

These measures would have sought to prevent the kind of pain that Kate’s family has been forced to endure, a pain that no family should have to experience.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY  
LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

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

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

IMMIGRATION LEGISLATION,  
OPIOID CRISIS, AND ZIKA VIRUS  
FUNDING

Mr. REID. Mr. President, my friend the Republican leader talks about playing politics. There is no better example of that than what has taken place this week.

Everyone knows the innate problems with what was tried on sanctuary cities and on the so-called Kate’s Law. Everyone knows they are just a political message that means nothing for comprehensive immigration reform or immigration reform of any kind. So that is why those matters were brought up.

It is obvious we have a Senator in Pennsylvania, a Republican incumbent, who is in deep trouble politically, and that is why they tried to jam us with that. There is no better example than what is going on with this opioid matter that is sweeping the country.

I came to the floor 15 minutes ago. In another half hour there will be another two people who die from opioids in America, all over the country. To show how disingenuous and political the majority is on opioids, one need only look to Tennessee. In Tennessee, Knoxville chief of police David Rausch knocks Congress over opioid funding.

My friend talks about the authorization that shot through here. Of course it came through the Senate pretty easily—because it was an authorization. There is no money there. That is why you have the chief of police from a place such as Knoxville, TN, who is saying: Shame on you for not giving us money. We can’t do anything. All you are doing is authorizing more programs that cost more resources. In the police department we can’t do it all. Rausch said:

It’s absolutely disappointing that Congress didn’t move today on funding. Unfortunately, today Congress did not do their job.

He is right. He said:

That’s the message it sends to our communities. If they’re not getting treated, they die.

That is the way it is.

We are having a conference report come to us that gives no resources. That is why you have people all over the country, and Rausch went to the White House with 20 other law enforcement leaders from across the country to talk about this. They came for one reason and one reason only—to get money so they can do something to stop this terrible thing that is going on in America today.

But, again, just like Zika, it is all for show—no money.

The threat of Zika continues to rise. Republicans are intent on wasting time with their partisan and deeply unserious conference report. They will force yet another failed vote on this cynical legislation and then pack their bags for the longest Senate vacation since 1954. The Senate will not pass this Republican conference report. President Obama will not sign it. This reckless exercise will leave the public health experts and officials no closer to getting the funding they need to help combat this horrible epidemic.

As we speak, there are more than 2,900 people in the United States and our territories with Zika. Nearly 500 pregnant women are showing evidence of infection by the Zika virus. At least seven babies have been born in the United States with Zika-related birth defects. We all know what they are—little heads, skulls caved in, brains that are small. And it is only going to get worse unless we act.

There is a path forward toward a bipartisan solution combating this terrible virus if Republicans are willing to do something. In May, the Senate passed a bipartisan compromise to address the Zika crisis. It had money in it—real money. It got 89 votes, which is an unimaginable margin for many pieces of legislation. Only the most conservative, conservative rightwing Members of this body voted against it. So maybe that is not a plus for my Republican friends. Maybe they want to be a part of that. You don’t receive anything from the Koch brothers if you are not way over there.

The bill we approved with 89 votes wasn’t perfect. I didn’t like it because I thought there should be more money. We asked for \$1.9 billion, but with 89 votes, we got \$1.1 billion in funding, which is short of what we feel is needed. It is not sufficient, but at least it is a step in the right direction.

When our country is faced with an emergency, the American people should be able to turn to us—Congress—to act. They expect us to put politics aside. We have already done that in the Senate—we Democrats. The Senate bill, while imperfect, was not riddled with toxic, partisan provisions. We need to get the compromise to the President’s desk.

Today I call upon Speaker RYAN to bring the Senate-passed Zika bill to us

for a vote. It would pass. The \$1.1 billion is not to my liking, but I would accept it in a heartbeat. This legislation would save lives, and it would pass the House of Representatives if they would let the Democrats vote. But Speaker RYAN has this deal that he is following, which is a deal into oblivion. It didn't work for my friend, whom I care so much about, former Speaker Boehner. It didn't work for him, and it is not going to work for Speaker RYAN. He cannot do this. He cannot try to do everything in his power to appease the far-right crazies in his caucus. They are even adhering to the Hastert rule, named after the disgraced former Speaker Dennis Hastert, who is now in prison.

Speaker RYAN should listen to the American people. They desperately want Congress to act. Americans have had enough of Republicans putting party over country this year—and any year, frankly. They want us to responsibly solve problems like the Zika virus and opioids and not waste time appealing to the most extreme elements in our political system.

The Hastert rule is that the Speaker will not allow a vote unless it can pass with the majority of the majority. To get a majority of the majority over there is worse than trying to get a majority of the majority over here. We have some dandies over here, but they take the cake in their efforts. It is not going to work for us, Speaker RYAN. We are willing to work with you to get this done.

We shouldn't just leave here for this 7-week-long vacation with nothing done on Zika, this terrible scourge we have. It is time for Speaker RYAN and his fellow Republicans to put politics aside and let the whole House vote on this. Our country is facing an emergency with Zika, and it is time for Republicans to start treating it as such.

Mr. President, I heard a Republican Senator come to the floor yesterday and she said: I don't know what they are talking about. The words "Planned Parenthood" are not in the legislation we have.

Of course it doesn't say "Planned Parenthood," but if you read the English language, it stops people from going to these Planned Parenthood clinics to get their advice on birth control, where millions of American women go.

My Republican friends have an obsession with Planned Parenthood. They want to do everything they can to stop them. In fact, as you know, there were Republicans who went and got phony pictures that were proven false. And, oh, that gave the Republicans such—oh, they loved that. Oh, what terrible stuff is going on; they are selling body parts. That was totally wrong. It was a scam by some rightwing character who has been shown to be just that—a scam artist.

The provision we are asked to vote for exempts pesticide spraying from the Clean Water Act provisions. It cuts

veteran funding by \$500 million below the Senate bill. What was that money for? It was to process veterans' claims. They whack it out. It cuts Ebola funding by \$107 million. It cuts ObamaCare by \$543 million.

I am sure my Republican friends are happy voting for this one. What we sent over there said you can't have the Confederate flag flying over military cemeteries. They took that out. That must be a real joy, that we can now start flying Confederate flags in cemeteries.

This legislation sets a terrible precedent of offsetting emergencies. It is wrong.

Mr. President, I ask the Chair to announce the business of the day.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the House message to accompany S. 764, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

House message to accompany S. 764, a bill to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McConnell motion to concur in the House amendment to the bill, with McConnell (for Roberts) amendment No. 4935, in the nature of a substitute.

McConnell amendment No. 4936 (to amendment No. 4935), to change the enactment date.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

#### AUDITING THE BOOKS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to send a message to Secretary of Defense Carter. I wish to alert him to a problem that needs high-level attention. It is standing in the way of one of the top priority goals of the Congress—auditing the books of the Defense Department.

The need for annual financial audits was originally established by the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990. By March of 1992, each agency of the Federal Government was supposed to present a financial statement to an inspector general for audit in accordance with the prescribed standards. To date, all departments have earned unqualified or clean opinions. But there is one glaring exception; that is, the Defense Department. It has a dubious distinction, under both Republican and Democrat administrations, of earning an unblemished string of failing opinions known as "disclaimers."

In the face of endless slipping and stumbling, Congress finally cracked

down—except it looks as though the crackdown hasn't done any good. At that time, there was a new line drawn in the sand. It was placed in section 1003 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2009. In 2009, the Department was given a charitable 7-year reprieve from the requirement to have their books auditable, and it was given until September 30, 2017. Those 7 bonus years did not buy us in the Congress much. All the slipping and sliding and stumbling have continued undiminished.

The 25-year push to audit the books is stuck at a roadblock. Billions of dollars have been spent trying to solve the root cause of the problem, but the fix is nowhere in sight. And until it is, auditing the books will remain an elusive goal for the Department of Defense but a goal that has been met by every other agency of the Federal Government.

What I am talking about is the Department's broken accounting system. This problem has been a festering sore for many years. It adversely affected every facet of the audit effort. The broken accounting system is driving the audit freight train. How could the mighty Defense Department be buffeted for so long by something so simple? The Pentagon develops and produces the most advanced weapons the world has ever known and does it with relative ease. Yet the Defense Department can't seem to acquire the tools it needs to keep track of the money it spends.

With little or no fiscal accountability, Congress cannot exercise effective oversight of defense spending. If Congress can't do that, then adding money to the defense budget, and borrowing at the same time to do it, is foolish, in my book. That is precisely why I opposed a recent amendment to add \$18 billion to the Defense bill.

I want to take a moment to put my spotlight on the issue. My hope is to stimulate creative problem-solving and innovative solutions that seem to not be getting their proper attention at the Department of Defense.

A recent press report pinpointed the cause for all the stumbling that is going on at the Defense Department. It drew on testimony by the government's preeminent authority on accounting, Comptroller General Gene Dodaro. His testimony before the Senate Committee on the Budget had a razor-sharp edge. It zeroed right in on the old stumbling block—underlying accounting problems. While the Pentagon is spending in excess of \$10 billion a year to modernize its vast accounting system, the GAO director said these investments "have not yielded positive results." And since DOD officials "continue to make system investments that don't produce better systems," he said, those responsible "need to be held accountable." They are wasting money, in other words. As a clear, unambiguous indicator of the continuing accounting mess, he cited