

called education “the civil rights issue of our time,” but his budget guts vital school programs, our future, our kids. He said: “Cures to illnesses that have always plagued us are not too much to hope,” but his budget slashes funding at the NIH and CDC where they do this research. And he said: “Save Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security without cuts. Have to do it,” but his budget cuts Social Security disability insurance and ends Medicaid as we know it.

The Trump budget is one giant, brazen, broken promise to the working men and women of America. It completely abandons them. Fundamentally, this is a deeply unserious proposal that should roundly be rejected by both parties here in Congress. I am optimistic that is what will happen.

We should follow the same blueprint we did in the 2017 budget: Both Democrats and Republicans, House and Senate, in a bipartisan way, everyone compromised. We should get together, negotiate a serious proposal that maintains our commitments to the middle class and actually sets up our economy to grow.

We cannot let the President turn America inside out with his budget. We have to stand together, Democrats and Republicans, and reject it for the sake of middle-class and working Americans. The Trump budget hopefully will not see the light of day.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNÝN. Mr. President, it was quite edifying to be sitting here listening to the Democratic leader speak this morning during the morning remarks, expressing his concern for healthcare, rural hospitals, and talking about his concerns about delivering healthcare to the poor. It is indeed ironic because at a time when ObamaCare, the Affordable Care Act, is literally in meltdown with unaffordable premiums and deductibles, we are not seeing any help whatsoever from our Democratic colleagues. I would suggest, rather than rail against the President’s budget, they ought to be engaged in a more constructive process of working with us to make sure we can deliver on the promise of affordable healthcare to all Americans.

Of course, there is the matter of the President’s budget itself. I remember that President Obama’s last budget got voted on here in the U.S. Senate. It got one vote—one vote. A President’s budget is not binding on the Congress. The Congress passes a budget resolution, both houses, and we anticipate doing that again.

The President’s budget is really a statement of the President’s priorities. Frankly, there are some things in the President’s proposed budget that I think are worthwhile—things like securing our border. At the end of the day, it is the job of Congress, though, to pass a budget that reflects the priorities of our country.

I think it is worth pointing out that several aspects of the President’s budg-

et are encouraging and a welcome change from the previous administration. For one, it balances in 10 years. I would love to have our Democratic colleagues express some concern for the fact that we continue to spend money we don’t have and impose the burden of repaying that money someday on future generations. To me, that is one of the most immoral things we do in this country; we spend the money today, and we leave the debt to our children and grandchildren to pay that back, which they must at some point. So when the President proposes a budget that actually balances in 10 years, I think that is a good thing. What a welcome relief from a White House budget anchored around overspending and growing the size of government, which we have seen for the last 8 years.

The other thing the President’s budget does is reverse the defense sequester. This is the artificial cap we put on defense spending.

Of all the things the Federal Government does, national security is the No. 1 job. You can’t outsource that to anyone. It is our No. 1 responsibility to keep the country safe and to keep America strong. Under the Obama administration, there was a cap put in place that prevented increased military spending, and indeed we saw cuts to the military of about 20 percent during the Obama years.

One thing that President Trump has done, which I find a welcome sign, is to properly resource our military so we can better defend against increasing threats around the world. It is simply irresponsible for us to allow our men and women in the military to operate on slashed budgets and outdated equipment. They can’t even train and be ready for the next fight. The best deterrent to war and the best assurance of peace is a strong America. The President’s budget reflects a better understanding of the threat environment ahead, and for that I am grateful.

So rather than railing against the President’s budget, which he knows will not be passed into law—because no President’s budget ever becomes law; it is a proposal of the President’s priorities. As I said, there is much to like among the President’s priorities—balancing the budget, emphasizing national security spending, and the like. Ultimately, we will have to come up with a budget ourselves. So I find the Democratic leader’s railing against the President’s budget, which he knows will not become law as written, somewhat ironic.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. President, on another matter, I have the privilege of serving as the chairman of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Border Security and Immigration. It is a role I take seriously in light of the many challenges our Nation faces when it comes to security and trade along our southern border.

The Texas-Mexico border makes up more than 60 percent of the total U.S. southern border. That means Texas is

at the epicenter of the national security conversation when it comes to border security and protecting communities that thrive on cross-border trade, not to mention the U.S. economy that reaps 5 million jobs as a result of binational trade with Mexico alone.

Later today, the subcommittee will have a chance to examine this important topic and consider ways that Congress can help the Trump administration make America safer and our borders stronger. In particular, I look forward to hearing from Chief Ron Vitiello, who is currently Acting Deputy Commissioner for Customs and Border Protection. He actually is the head Border Patrol agent for the Federal Government, a man who has spent many years on the frontlines and knows from experience the challenges that exist in securing the border.

Customs and Border Protection agents and officers face a range of challenges every day, working in some of the most inhospitable environments and remote locations, often without adequate resources or equipment. They work tirelessly to combat drug trafficking, arms smuggling, illegal immigration, and human trafficking, while simultaneously working to facilitate legitimate trade and travel between Mexico and the United States.

I spoke a little bit about this yesterday in light of NAFTA’s importance to the Texas and U.S. economy. Texas is a first port of entry for many goods and many people coming from all over the world, and it takes a solid team of Customs and Border Patrol professionals and good leadership to manage the border and the many ports of entry along it. I am grateful to Chief Vitiello for his hard work and look forward to his testimony this afternoon.

This administration has made clear that securing the border is a top priority, and I agree with that. I am confident that with topnotch leaders like Secretary Kelly of the Department of Homeland Security and Attorney General Jeff Sessions, we will finally make real progress toward getting it done.

The appropriations bill that was recently signed into law included the largest increase for border security technologies and infrastructure improvement in more than a decade. Fortunately, the President’s budget supports increased investment in border security and immigration enforcement, as well, including new infrastructure and technologies to help us achieve operational control of the southern border. This focus on border security is a welcome change from the previous administration, and I am glad we now have leaders who will take the need to achieve true border security seriously.

I have always said that border security ultimately is a matter of political will. The Obama administration didn’t have it; the Trump administration does. With the political will and with the guidance of experts like Chief Vitiello and others who tell us exactly

what the Border Patrol needs in order to secure the border, I am confident of our ability to get it done.

I will just relate the conversation I had with the Chief of the Rio Grande Border Patrol sector, Chief Manny Padilla. Chief Padilla long served in the Border Patrol in many different places along the border.

Of course, the border is very different in San Diego than it is in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. For one thing, Texas has virtually all private property along the border and, of course, is separated by the Rio Grande River from Mexico.

What Chief Padilla has said to me, which I believe is absolutely the case, is that it takes three different things to secure the border. It takes infrastructure. You can call it fencing, like the Secure Fence Act that we passed a few years ago that almost all of our Democratic colleagues voted for. It takes things like levy walls, which we have in Hidalgo County and the Rio Grande Valley. But it also takes technology and personnel because we know that no piece of infrastructure alone is going to provide the security we need. But fundamentally we need to regain the people's trust and confidence that the Federal Government will carry out its primary responsibility to protect our citizens and defend our borders.

Border security is complex. It is multifaceted and requires an approach that includes air, sea, and land. That is why we need a multilayered approach to border security that includes infrastructure, like the President talks about frequently when he talks about the wall. It takes technology, and it takes the men and women in the Border Patrol who do the dangerous but important work of keeping our border secure and keeping our country safe.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, shortly we will be voting on cloture on the nomination of John Sullivan, the nominee to be Deputy Secretary of State, and as the ranking Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I urge my colleagues to support the cloture motion and support the nomination of John Sullivan to be the next Deputy Secretary of State.

MANCHESTER ATTACK

Before I begin, I want to express that I strongly condemn yesterday's heart-breaking attack in Manchester. I want to express my sincere condolences to the families of those who lost loved ones, especially the innocent and defenseless children who were brutally killed. As a father and grandfather, I mourn with them, and I am praying for the recovery of the injured.

The United States stands in firm solidarity with our friends in the United Kingdom. The United States will provide the necessary assistance as British authorities work to bring those responsible to justice. I know I speak for all my colleagues in the Senate in our sol-

idarity with our friends in the United Kingdom.

Mr. President, in regard to Mr. Sullivan's nomination to be Deputy Secretary of State, he is well qualified for that position. He served in the Justice Department and in the private practice of law. He served as Deputy General Counsel at the Department of Defense. He also has been involved in the Department of Commerce, where he was General Counsel and Deputy Secretary. He is well familiar with government. He served in public positions and also brings private experience as a lawyer to the position of Deputy Secretary of State.

I do want to point out—as I pointed out to Mr. Sullivan and as most members of our committee did—that he will find himself home alone for a period of time, in that the Trump administration has not submitted to Congress nominees for important positions at the Department of State. Yes, I have confidence in the career people at the Department of State, but there are times that we have to have a confirmed person in control in order to advance policies. So it is important—from embassy security, to fighting terrorism, to helping with the humanitarian challenges we have around the world and the administration of our missions in all the countries around the world—that we have a team in place. The Trump administration has been slow in providing us with qualified individuals to fill these positions. Thus far, the administration has decided to treat the State Department as an inconvenience rather than as a critical national security asset.

Secondly, I want to express my concern about something that will make Mr. Sullivan's job a lot more difficult—the international affairs budget for fiscal year 2018 that the administration is unveiling today. Although we are still receiving details, as I look at the massive spending cuts to vital national security, it is impossible to conclude this is anything but an “America alone” budget—one that, if enacted, will have disastrous effects on our standing in the world.

Let me repeat one more time that the money we spend on development assistance, on diplomacy, and that we spend in regard to helping our allies around the world and countries around the world is part of our national security budget. It is part of our national security budget, and yet the President's fiscal year 2018 budget would compromise national security.

As Secretary Mattis has said—often quoted on this floor—if you don't give the Secretary of State and the State Department the resources they need, you better be prepared to give them more ammunition and more soldiers because it is going to be more costly for them to defend.

It is very disappointing that the budget slashes critical support to our allies in their efforts to defeat terrorism, including zeroing out counter-

insurgency support in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan. It will slash funds to support the defense needs of countless foreign partner countries and offer them the unpalatable option of going into debt to the United States to get the defense equipment and support they need. This is certain to damage our security, counterterrorism, and security interests with these countries and prove a golden opportunity for Russia and China to take the place of the United States. This is serious business. If we don't help countries that are part of our coalition against terrorism, if we don't give them the resources to help us, then, quite clearly, our enemies will move in. As we know, Russia has done many things against U.S. interests. The voids will be quickly picked up by Russia and China.

This is a budget proposal that cuts support to European allies to counter Russia's aggression—precisely when Russia's assault on our democracy and the democracies of our European democracies has reached a fever pitch. At a time when the United States should be standing up for our allies and partners in Europe, this budget zeros out the Assistance for Europe, Eurasia and Central Asia—AEECA—account and eliminates the European Reassurance Initiative altogether. This was an initiative that was set up to counter Russia's influence in Europe, and we are going to zero that out?

This is a budget proposal that walks away from the promotion of democratic values. It slashes funding for human rights and democracy programs abroad and hollows out the ideas, initiatives, and institutions on which U.S. leadership and international order rests, like the United Nations Peacekeeping.

In his remarks in Saudi Arabia this past weekend, President Trump applauded Jordan, Turkey, and Lebanon for their role in hosting refugees. Yet draconian humanitarian funding cuts would harm these very friends and allies who are hosting millions of refugees. What an inconsistent message. It also eliminates the U.N. emergency food aid program at a time of famine in Africa and the Middle East. If these budget cuts are implemented, many people around the world will die as a result of diminished resources and support that would result. We can't let that happen.

It is a budget proposal that undermines our ability to deal with pressing national security challenges, including development assistance, humanitarian aid, and climate change. The administration's budget proposal slashes more than 30 percent from our foreign assistance budget and dramatically cuts support for critical programs to save the lives of mothers in childbirth, feed hungry children, educate young people, train farmers, and the like. These programs exemplify U.S. values and promote the power of democracy and the importance of protecting human rights.