

We should fund government for the remainder of this year—no more short-term continuing resolutions—enough. It is enough. We need to stop that. The majority of Members in this Chamber and throughout Congress understand that we can't keep doing this. Any deal should increase support for our military, and it should provide parity for our domestic needs: to address the opioid epidemic; for our veterans; for the Children's Health Insurance Program and community health centers; for those Medicaid payments that are so critical to our rural hospitals; for disaster relief in Florida, Texas, California, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands; and for pension relief for people who have worked their whole lives and who are facing old age without the pensions they paid into.

We can get this done. There are enough people of goodwill on both sides of the aisle in this body and in the other body so that we can do this if we are allowed to work together. So Democrats and Republicans, let's get this done. Let's keep the government funded, and let's show the American people that we can work together in the interests of this country.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

#### CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mr. GRASSLEY. I thank the Presiding Officer.

Should the Children's Health Insurance Program be reauthorized? Of course it should be reauthorized. It has a long history of strong bipartisan support. This is a major issue in reaching the point of whether we need to get something passed—and we do need to get something passed so the government doesn't shut down. In regard to the Children's Health Insurance Program being a part of that, this started very early last fall, when the Senate Finance Committee overwhelmingly passed a 5-year extension from that committee, once again stating the strong bipartisan support that the Children's Health Insurance Program has.

Thankfully, it is moving along in the House of Representatives. That body has included a 6-year extension of the Children's Health Insurance Program in the continuing resolution that we have to get through the U.S. Senate. That 6-year extension would be the longest extension of the program since it was created over 20 years ago.

I am sure this is going to be surprising to our constituents, for sure, and maybe even surprising to Members of this body, but this reauthorization of 6 years actually saves \$1 billion.

I cannot believe that we are in a situation where people who have said that they support the Children's Health Insurance Program would vote against its reauthorization when the House res-

olution comes over here, but that is what the leadership of this body is dealing with. The reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program has been elevated in this debate, so people know that those who have been crying for a long period of time about finally having CHIP reauthorized could be in a situation of voting against what they have been pleading for over a long period of time.

My colleague from the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator FEINSTEIN, said: "Healthcare coverage for kids should be a no-brainer." I agree. This Children's Health Insurance Program reauthorization is a no-brainer, both in the value it has for the kids and in saving us money at this point.

Senators WARNER and Kaine from Virginia wrote: "We ask that you include bipartisan legislation reauthorizing the Children's Health Insurance Program in any upcoming funding legislation." Well, it is here for all of those Senators who want the Children's Health Insurance Program reauthorized. This is the opportunity to reauthorize it.

Will you vote against what you have been advocating for a long time—the reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program? In my State of Iowa, 68,792 children—the latest enrollment—are in CHIP and are depending upon Congress to do the right thing. The right thing to do is to reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program as soon as possible—which could be today or tomorrow—for 6 years so that we don't have to deal with it for a long period of time.

My fellow Senators, this is a time for statesmanship, not gamesmanship. It is time to vote for a prompt reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program.

#### TAX REFORM

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to speak about a tax issue. It was nearly 3 weeks ago that the President signed into law the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. It is the most sweeping reform of our Tax Code in more than three decades. This tax reform provides both tax simplification and tax cuts for the vast majority of taxpayers.

Importantly, the tax reform bill made good on its commitment to provide real relief to small business owners, and that also includes family farmers and ranchers. As one of only three Republican Senators on both the Finance Committee and the Agriculture Committee, it was a priority of mine to represent agriculture and the family farm institution throughout the tax reform debate.

Fair treatment for farmers under tax reform was especially important to me, given the large role agriculture plays in the economy of the State of Iowa. Ag accounts for one out of every five jobs in the State and makes up 33 percent of Iowa's economy. The tax reform bill provided a once-in-a-generation op-

portunity to make real and long-lasting reforms for farmers, ranchers, and every American working in our agricultural industry.

Broadly speaking, across the board, rate reductions will let Americans keep more of their own money. This will afford farmers the opportunity to reinvest in their operations instead of sending that financial capital to politicians in Washington.

Tax reform legislation expands section 179 of the Tax Code, which helps farmers finance overhead costs. It enables farmers to deduct more expenses in the year they occurred and also expands the availability of cash accounting to more farmers in Iowa and throughout the country. These provisions will allow farmers to invest in the equipment necessary to do the job of feeding the Nation and the world.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act lowers taxes on capital investment and includes a business income deduction, which will help level the playing field between farms that file as corporations and those that file as individuals. More than 94 percent of farms are taxed under the IRS provisions affecting individual taxpayers. The bulk of agriculture producers who operate outside the corporate tax code deserve basic fairness. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act makes sure that those taxed under the individual and corporate tax codes are treated with more equity.

One of the most frequently discussed issues in tax reform discussion is the estate tax, which can force family farms to break up operations to pay the IRS following the death of family members. That doesn't happen at the death of a lot of farmers, but in a few cases it does, and it seems to me to be very unfair to break up a farming operation to pay as a result of the consequence of death. I support a full repeal of this unfair tax, but was pleased that in this tax reform legislation we were able to make significant progress in alleviating its burden on family farmers by doubling the estate tax exemption. This substantial change would let more family farmers pass their hard-earned life's work on to their children, paving the way for the next generation of family farmers.

According to the Iowa Farm Bureau, given the price of farmland, about 30 percent of crop farms in Iowa exceeded the \$5 million estate tax exemption in 2016, based on land values. The doubling of the exemption amount will go a long way toward alleviating the nightmare that is the death tax for many Iowa farmers.

I have long advocated for common-sense tax relief measures because they will help Iowa and the Midwest and will make life easier for middle-class Americans.

Farmers' hard work provides the healthy and affordable food that we so often take for granted. We should do everything in our power to support that segment of our economy and create an environment where these small

businesses and hard-working families can thrive and prosper. That is what tax reform will do for farmers, for Iowans, and for all Americans. Whether they are middle-class farmers or middle-class nonfarmers, all will benefit from other provisions of the tax bill, such as doubling the standard deduction, doubling the child tax credit, reducing the 15-percent bracket to 12, reducing the 25-percent bracket to 22, and there are a lot of other features in this bill to benefit not only farmers but also other middle-class families.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

#### DACA AND TPS

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, the Dreamers are part of this country. They are America's future. They are helping to build this great Nation, and they need our attention now.

The Republicans control the House, the Senate, and the White House. One of their principal responsibilities is to pass a budget. We are now 4 months into the fiscal year and we don't have a budget and we are talking about another continuing resolution through mid-February.

A couple weeks ago, we were told on the floor to give it a couple more weeks and we would work some of these issues out, but that time has now come, and we still do not have a budget. We should not be going into February without dealing with the problems of this country. We need a deal on the budget. We need a deal for an agreement on the Dreamers. We have so many issues that need to be addressed. There is no excuse why the Republican leadership has not brought these issues to the floor of the Senate for action.

I want to start, in regard to the Dreamers, by commending the bipartisan work of a group convened by Senators GRAHAM and DURBIN. They have come up with a good plan that addresses key issues needed for a compromise on immigration reform. I was pleased to see they put on their website a summary of the proposed legislation that deals with the Dreamers. It deals with border security, deals with diversity visas, those who are in temporary protective status, and family reunification and migration.

The draft legislation we saw would provide a 12-year pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, with up to 2 years of credit for time with DACA. The qualified Dreamers must have entered the United States by June 15, 2012, when President Obama and the Department of Homeland Security announced the creation of the DACA Program. I think most of us know DACA stands for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program.

Let me just talk a few minutes about the Dreamers. These are individuals who entered our country as minors, when they were brought here by their

parents to seek a better life. Under the DACA Program, they were entitled to a 2-year renewable work permit and the ability to remain in this country without fear of deportation. Each one has to go through a criminal background check. They need to be enrolled in school. They must either be high school graduates or in the U.S. military.

In the United States today, we have 800,000 who are registered under the Dreamers. There are about 10,000 in my State of Maryland, and they are contributing half a billion dollars to Maryland's gross domestic product. They are a key part of our economy. They are the next generation of teachers, doctors, engineers, and entrepreneurs. They are going to help build America. Most know no other country but the United States, which is their home, and our values, which make America the great Nation it is.

We are a welcoming country. We are a country in which people have come over the years to build this great Nation. That is America's strength. Let us build on our strength, not run away from it. Are we going to turn our back now on the values that built this country? Are we going to rip families apart? Is that what America stands for? I find that hard to imagine.

At the same time, we would hurt our economy and hurt ourselves. I have met with many Dreamers in Maryland. We had one in my office a few weeks ago who had tears in her eyes. She said: I have an expiration date on my back. She doesn't know what is going to happen when that date occurs. To me—and I hope to all Americans—this country is not a country where someone should have to live under those fears. We need to take action to help the Dreamers.

I have had several roundtable discussions with Dreamers in Maryland. I had them in College Park, Baltimore, and other areas throughout Maryland. Let me just mention two Dreamers I met with. Adam was originally born in Canada. His family grew up in Pakistan. He came to the United States with his parents when he was very young. Becky—who was born in Peru—came here with her parents to the United States. I mention them collectively because they both attend the University of Maryland, College Park.

Our State allows Dreamers to have in-state tuition to go to college and get the tools they need in order to succeed. They need work permits because they have to work; otherwise, they never would have been able to get through school. They need a driver's license. Adam explained to me he needed a driver's license to get to a magnet school so he could advance his own education.

That was all possible—the ability to get a driver's license and the ability to work—because of President Obama's Executive order, the DACA Program. Now all of that has been put in doubt because of President Trump's an-

nouncement that the program will end. It puts their lives on hold in fear, and they wonder whether they need to go into the shadows of the United States of America.

This is a crisis which was created by President Trump when he announced the end of the DACA Program in 6 months. That will expire in March. President Trump's actions to rescind the DACA Program are wrong. We can correct it. That is what Congress can do and what we must do.

Our university community in Maryland strongly supports the DACA Program. I have heard from the University of Maryland system, Johns Hopkins University, and many other schools in our State. This fall, I received a joint letter from the public school secondary systems of Prince George's County, Anne Arundel County, Howard County, Montgomery County, and Baltimore City. This is what the school superintendents wrote to me:

Maryland is a national leader in providing students with a world-class education. Essential to our success is our commitment to providing children in our schools with a safe and welcoming environment to learn. Termination of DACA will have direct and damaging effects on the Maryland students who are current beneficiaries.

The schools' letter continues:

It is a direct threat to Maryland's economic stability and safety, as it will strip students of their ability to work and drive legally, pay taxes, and pursue post-secondary opportunities. Parents who lose work authorizations will face deportation or be moved into a dangerous underground economy, causing financial uncertainty for their families and harmful stress on their children—our students.

In addition, the DACA decision could impact our ability to motivate our youth to remain committed to their education and pursuing college or careers, and will lead to worsening economic hardships of our DACA community.

This is from our school systems in Maryland.

I heard similar concerns from law enforcement officials. Tom Manger, who cochairs the Law Enforcement Immigration Task Force and is the police chief in Montgomery County, wrote:

Our support for a legislative solution for Dreamers is consistent with our longstanding support for bipartisan reform of our immigration system. We support measures allowing law-abiding people to feel safe and secure in their communities, which reinforce trust and cooperation with state and local law enforcement. Beyond the significant contributions Dreamers make to our communities, we are concerned that, absent action by Congress, the Dreamer population will be driven back into the shadows and be hesitant to report crimes and cooperate with investigations. Such an outcome would risk undermining community safety. When Dreamers, and all immigrants, feel safe engaging with local police, all of our communities are safer.

I certainly agree with Chief Manger.

A group similar to the Dreamers are those who are here in temporary protected status, or TPS. There are 437,000 people in America from El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Somalia,