

on them to do just that. These incredibly short-term extensions would not even give us enough time to actually write the legislation the Democratic leader is demanding. One extremely short-term CR would lead to another and another—exactly the outcome Democrats have declared they cannot accept.

Now, I wish for all of our sakes that the Democratic leader would figure out what he actually wants. I feel bad for his own Members. He has painted them into a corner, but I especially feel bad for the American people whose government the Democrats are threatening to shut down and the 9 million children whose health insurance could be thrown into jeopardy because Senate Democrats cannot get their story straight.

Now, my friend the Democratic leader now wants his Members to pass a bill that allows SCHIP to expire. Apparently, he now wants every Democrat in the House of Representatives to break their word and pass a separate funding bill of his own that does not address the illegal immigration issue they said they must have. So let's think about this for a minute. First, he leads his own troops into a box canyon, and then tells them it was really all for nothing. Maybe it is time to come back to reality.

We already have a bill that we know can pass the House because it already did. We have a bill that we know the President will sign into law because he has already committed to do just that. We know that with one noncontroversial and bipartisan vote we can keep the government up and running. We can fund the children's healthcare program for 6 years, and we can give ourselves the time we need to finish ongoing negotiations on DACA, border security, and the long-term needs of our military. We could do all of that today—all of it—or our Democratic friends can continue to take the Democratic leader's advice and vote to shut down the government, destabilize funding for our troops, shut down the children's healthcare program, and still not get what they are demanding on illegal immigration. It is really up to them.

I look forward to voting soon on cloture on the House bill. The American people, the citizens who actually elected us, will be watching. They will see which Senators make the patriotic decision to stand up for the American people and vote to continue government funding and extend children's healthcare while we continue our bipartisan talks, and they will see which Senators vote to shove aside veterans, military families, and vulnerable children and to hold the entire country hostage until we pass an immigration bill they haven't even written yet.

It is completely unfair and uncompassionate for my Democratic colleagues to filibuster government funding, harm our troops, and jeopardize health coverage for 9 million

children because extreme elements of their base want illegal immigration to crowd out every other priority. Apparently, they believe the issue of illegal immigration is more important than everything else—all the government services the American people depend on.

I would recommend to stop the wild-goose chase. Don't go to a destination that cannot be explained. Let's fulfill the core responsibilities of Congress. Let's fund the government, provide for the American people, and then resume serious negotiations on the issues that matter most. Let's fund the government for a full month so we can actually get something done.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

FEDERAL REGISTER PRINTING SAVINGS ACT OF 2017

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 195, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

House message to accompany H.R. 195, a bill to amend title 44, United States Code, to restrict the distribution of free printed copies of the Federal Register to Members of Congress and other officers and employees of the United States, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McConnell motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill.

McConnell motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, with McConnell amendment No. 1903 (to the House amendment to the Senate amendment to the bill), to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 1904 (to amendment No. 1903), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell motion to refer the message of the House on the bill to the Committee on Appropriations, with instructions, McConnell amendment No. 1905, to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 1906 (to (the instructions) amendment No. 1905), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell amendment No. 1907 (to amendment No. 1906), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, let's look at the reality of what we face at this moment in this country in this Chamber. The Republicans are in majority control of the Senate. The Republicans are in majority control of the House of Representatives. The Republicans are in control of the White

House. The Republicans, through their appointees, have a pretty decisive edge when it comes to the U.S. Supreme Court. In other words, when you look across the spectrum of the three branches of government, the Republicans are in control.

What are they offering us? The fourth CR. Now, CR is Washington talk. It is a continuing resolution. What does it mean? It means that the Republican majority has failed in 119 days to produce a budget for the United States of America. The Republican majority in the House and Senate—with their President—has failed to come up with a blueprint for spending for this great Nation that we serve and are proud to be part of.

Their fourth failure to produce a budget in this fiscal year, which began October 1, is before us now. Was it negotiated between the Republicans and Democrats? No. It was produced in the House of Representatives and with the Senate. It was passed there by the Republicans and a handful of Democrats who supported it, and it was sent over here on a take-it-or-leave-it basis.

Well, you say, at least we are going to keep the lights on. And that is all a continuing resolution does—keeps the lights on. It doesn't allow agencies to make important decisions that invest taxpayers' dollars wisely and save taxpayers' dollars.

Last night, the Department of Defense reported to us. They are sick and tired of the continuing resolutions that they have faced for 3 years—note that I said 3 years—because we have failed, even on the Democratic side, to come up with appropriations and budgets in the past. So I am being very honest about it.

If we are going to change this mentality of never producing a budget, never producing appropriations bills—kind of stumbling into the fiscal year for month after weary month—if that is the new norm around here, shame on us. And shame on the majority party, the Republicans, for saying that is the best they can do. We can do better.

We need to get beyond this world of continuing resolutions, and we need to get into a world where we actually make a decision that is good for the taxpayers, as well as the security of the United States of America. The best the Republican leader in the Senate can offer us is another bandaid, another 4 weeks of temporary funding—a wasteful gesture, a wasteful exercise, and he knows it.

There is more to this issue. Senator MCCONNELL brings it up regularly. Last night he did and again today. He glories in saying that this is all about illegal immigrants. Let's be honest about what we are talking about here. We are talking about those who were protected and allowed to live in the United States legally under an Executive order of President Obama's until September 5 of last year when President

Donald Trump announced he was eliminating this program. As that protection is eliminated, as their 2-year protection expires, yes, they move into illegal categories. So are they illegal technically after they have lost DACA? Yes. What caused it? President Donald Trump caused it by his announcement on September 5 that this program is finished by March 5. That is the reality.

Do you know what he also told us? I am going to end this program. Now I challenge you in Congress to pass a law to replace it.

So what has the Republican majority in the House and Senate done in the 4½ months since we received that challenge from President Trump? Nothing.

Then I hear Senator MCCONNELL say: We haven't even seen a written proposal from the Democrats on this.

The Senator knows better. A group of us—six of us, three Democrats and three Republicans—accepted President Trump's challenge and produced a bipartisan solution. We have described it to everyone, Democrat and Republican alike. It was a good-faith effort, real compromise and pain on both sides. It is ready. It is ready to be brought to the floor of the Senate. It is ready to be passed into law. For Senator MCCONNELL to say he doesn't know anything about it—I am sorry, but we have been very open about what is included in there. He knows it is a product of long and hard bipartisan work.

I would like to address another aspect of what he has said about these so-called illegal immigrants. Late last night, after using that term, I noticed the Gallery was filled over here with young people who appeared to be, at first glance, here to watch the debate on the Dream Act, the debate on DACA. After the meeting of the Senate, I invited them into my office. There were about 40 of them. They are from all across the United States but primarily from the State of Oregon. They came all the way out here to try to see if this Senate was going to meet President Trump's challenge and produce an alternative. It turns out that most of them were protected by DACA, the Executive order that is being abolished by President Trump.

One of them said to me: I am skipping my first week of classes at the University of Texas.

I said: What is your major?

She said: Neuroscience.

I said: Don't skip too many classes.

That has to be a tough thing to do, but she came here because what is at stake in this Chamber, what is at stake in this debate, will decide whether she can continue to live in the United States of America.

For Senator MCCONNELL to dismiss this issue and say that we will get around to it later is to ignore the obvious. For many of these young people, this debate, this moment, may decide their future. It may decide the future of their families. Are they worried? To say the least—half of them were crying as they came into my office.

At a point when I was talking to them, I said: We are going to do everything we can to help your parents.

They all broke down crying. That is what this is about. This is about a heart-wrenching issue that is before us because President Trump made a decision on September 5 to end a program that allowed these young people to go to school and to work in the United States of America. It was President Trump who challenged us to do something about it, and we have done nothing—nothing. And that is the challenge we face. To say we are in no hurry—well, we may not be as Senators and Congressmen, but these young people are in a hurry to find out whether they have a life. That is what it comes down to.

There was an announcement just a few minutes ago from the House side. The Republican leadership in the House of Representatives—despite the fact that we do not have an agreement moving forward—is going to leave. They are going to leave Washington. I don't know for how long, and I don't know what they are going to do when they leave, but I would beg them: Don't turn your backs on your responsibility right here in Washington to work with us, to find a way to move forward.

We have come up with a proposal. It is a short-term, last-step continuing resolution of just a few days. I have been around here for a while. If you give the Senate and House a couple of weeks, it turns into a couple of months. If we do this in a matter of 3 or 4 days to reach an agreement on these key issues—everything included in the CR that we have before us and everything that should be—I think we will roll up our sleeves, get down to work, and do it. We don't want to shut down this government. We want to solve the problems facing this government and this Nation. That means working together—something Senator MCCONNELL is not engaged in when it comes to this CR.

It is time for us as Democrats and Republicans to sit down in a room together and think about this great Nation and the frustration they have with our political system and those of us in political life. Nine out of ten—maybe even more—would say to us: For goodness' sake, will you stop your fighting? Will you stop your bickering? Will you stop your debating? Will you go into a room and act like grownups and do something together for the good of this Nation?

That is what we are proposing—to sit down together for the good of this Nation and to move forward.

When he was asked just a few days ago, Senator MCCONNELL said his biggest problem was that he didn't know what President Trump wants. I can understand that. I have been in meetings with the President where he said one thing on a Tuesday and a different thing on a Thursday, and then he tweeted something entirely different the next morning. He is a moving tar-

get when it comes to the policies and direction and leadership of this administration. We need to do our job, and I hope he will be part of it. I hope the President will join us. If he will, we can solve this problem. If he stands on the sidelines, we cannot.

I think we can find common ground. That is what the American people expect. We should give them nothing less. And of course we should solve the problems involving the Children's Health Insurance Program, community clinics, helping our veterans, the opioid crisis, defense spending, and a sane approach, a reasonable approach when it comes to these young people who have become illegal because of the decision by President Trump on September 5 of last year.

Together, we can get this done but not if the House Republicans leave town. We need to continue to be here in Washington doing our job and making sure that we spend every waking moment serving the people who elected us.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I listened to the distinguished Senator from Illinois. The Democrats never do anything wrong, do they? They are always right. I have to tell you, they do a lot of things that are wrong, and they are not always right. And this is a situation where they have literally pushed everybody in this country into the corner. Republicans want to do DACA. They want to take care of these young people. They have even interfered with that. I could go on and on.

All I can say is, I get a little sick of hearing some of these arguments that are made like they are holier than thou. They are not holier than thou; they are more political than thou.

I think it is time that we work together and get some things done here that make a difference in people's lives and especially in these young DACA kids' lives. We can do that, but we can't do it by just Democrats saying: Well, we are just going to give them everything they want. We are not going to worry about U.S. laws or immigration laws or anything else, for that matter.

It is incredible to me. I have put up with this all these years in the Senate, and they get away with it because the media in this country is primarily focused on them and basically supports them. And they admit it. That is the thing that is really mind-boggling—the media admits it. And the reason they do is because they know they would be laughed out of town if they didn't admit it.

All I can say is, we have a desire to resolve these problems in a reasonable and good manner. The majority leader has indicated that time after time. Politics always takes preference with our friends on the other side. They are good at it. They are really good at it, even though, if you really look at the

facts and you look behind what they are saying, it is a lot of bunk. Not all—I have worked with really top-notch Democrats in this body to do some of the most important legislation in this country's history when they were willing to sit down and really work with you. But politics rears its ugly head almost every time in such a way that it is almost impossible to get anything done around here. I have to admit, we have some on our side who fit that mode, as well.

I just wish we could do a better job. There are some of us who would do a better job if we knew that there was a way of bringing both sides together.

Having said that, we are now just a few hours away from a government shutdown, unless, of course, enough Senators can find a way to come together in order to avert it. Unfortunately, it appears that our Democratic colleagues would prefer a shutdown to compromise. The Democrats have activists and pundits cheering for that result. They have their Members in line to vote against the alternative. They have set the stage for a grand demonstration of their commitment.

But for the life of me, I can't see what they are committed to with this latest gesture to their political base. First of all, most of them don't object to the substance of the House-passed continuing resolution. That bill would keep the government open and address a number of bipartisan healthcare priorities. I don't know any Democrats who are against those. I am sure there may be some, but the rest of them, I think, are pretty much for it.

The bill before us includes what would be the longest extension of the Children's Health Insurance Program in history. CHIP has given children and their families access to quality healthcare. Maybe I have a right to speak on CHIP since I am the author of the CHIP bill and I believe in it. I believe it has done so much good for our young people in this society. I really resent it being played politics with all the time, which our friends on the other side just can't resist.

CHIP has given children and their families access to quality healthcare coverage for over two decades. It was founded on the belief that the health of our future is too important to be dragged down by the political bickering of the present. Approximately 9 million children depend on this critical program. It is important to me. After several months of uncertainty, those 9 million children deserve the peace of mind that comes with a long-term CHIP extension.

As I noted here on the floor the other day, as chairman of the Finance Committee, I have been working with my Democratic counterparts on a bipartisan CHIP extension bill for months now. The committee's ranking member, Senator WYDEN, and I introduced our initial bill earlier, last fall. That bill would have reauthorized CHIP for 5 years. It was promptly reported out of

the Finance Committee with near-unanimous support. Then the Democrats decided to pretend that bill never existed.

As we worked through a crowded legislative calendar at the end of last year, my colleagues were well aware that efforts to reauthorize CHIP were ongoing. Yet many of our colleagues accused Republicans of neglecting vulnerable children.

I was leading the fight as one of the leading Republicans, as chairman of the Finance Committee, the author of the original bill, the one who has always voted for it. I just want a bill that works and not the political brouhaha that it always becomes whenever some of the Democrats think they can score some political points. The attacks on this front were fierce and usually high volume. I was personally attacked by colleagues in committee, here on the floor, and in the media. All kinds of vitriol was thrown in my direction both here in the Senate and out in the political intelligentsia. No one needs to worry about me, Madam President. I can take it and throw it right back, if it is necessary. But for months, colleagues have been coming to the floor or going on TV—pretty much anywhere with a camera—to accuse Republicans of wanting to take away health insurance for vulnerable children. Total BS. Yet they do it all the time because they, with their friends in the media, know they can get away with it in spite of the wrong they are doing.

Throughout all of this time, they conveniently neglected to mention that bipartisan efforts with regard to CHIP were moving forward, even though they clearly knew that such was the case. In fact, one of the harshest critics was an original cosponsor of our bill and a Senator who voted in support of our bill in committee.

This new bill before us would reauthorize CHIP for 6 years—something that has never been done before. A 6-year extension would be the largest and longest in the history of the program. We had already done that in the Finance Committee. In all other respects, the bill is identical to the one the Finance Committee reported with broad bipartisan support.

So where are our colleagues today? Is Senator WYDEN, who coauthored the committee's CHIP bill, prepared to vote for an even longer extension of the CHIP program? Apparently not. Are other Democrats on the Finance Committee, including those who publicly touted their support for the committee bill, prepared to vote for this extension? Apparently not. What about those Senate Democrats—both on and off the Finance Committee—who have been on their own righteous crusades with respect to CHIP? Are they prepared to vote for it today? Apparently not.

What has changed? Do they oppose something in the broader bill? No. Most Democrats have supported the

other healthcare elements in the package, including delays on the medical device tax, the health insurance tax, and the so-called Cadillac tax from ObamaCare. The bill would accomplish those goals as well. Think about that.

What about the Democrats? Have they championed those causes? Are they prepared to vote in favor of this bill? Apparently not. The question is, Why? Why are Democrats willing to filibuster this continuing resolution and shut down the government? What crazy, rightwing fantasy have we inserted into the bill? Of course I am being sarcastic. There is really nothing wrong with the substance of the bill, or at least very few of our Democratic colleagues are complaining about what is actually in the bill. Instead, they are complaining about what is not in it. The Democrats think they have struck political gold with immigration this week, so they are holding everything hostage so that they can stage another "righteous" crusade on the floor and in TV interviews.

It should go without saying that I personally would like to see a legislative fix for the so-called Dreamers—undocumented immigrants brought to the United States as children. This is an important matter that needs to be addressed. Not only are there myriad elements to our Nation's immigration system that are in dire need of reform, immigration isn't something that can be solved with a few roundtables with the President and some quick negotiations behind the scenes. It certainly isn't something we can or should try to solve under the threat of an imminent government shutdown. Unless you have been hiding in a cave or trapped under something very heavy for the past 15 years, you know that immigration reform—even piecemeal reform—is an extremely difficult lift. There are Members of both parties willing to work on this. The President has indicated his willingness as well. But some don't want to go the reasonable route, so here we are.

I get that there is an adage in this town that no one should let a good crisis go to waste, and I certainly understand the desire to strike when a political iron is hot. And in the eyes of most Democrats, that time is now. However, if they filibuster this legislation, they will be filibustering authorized funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program. They will be voting to prevent this bipartisan effort—the one we have been talking about for years now—from moving forward; the one they have been harping about for years now from moving forward.

There is another political adage that goes around this town, one that horribly misquotes Napoleon. That axiom goes something like this: Never interrupt your opponent when they are making a mistake. Truthfully, I don't consider my Democratic colleagues to be my opponents, but a number of people, unfortunately, view Congress that way.

Setting those semantics aside, by urging my Democratic colleagues to vote in favor of this bill, I may very well be ignoring Napoleon's advice. Still, my colleagues have to know that if they vote to block this legislation, they will unequivocally be voting against a historically long-term Children's Health Insurance Program extension—the longest it has ever been, and I have had a lot to do with that. They will be voting to prolong the very crisis—that is their word, not mine—that they have been lamenting for the past several months. If they don't know that, the CHIP's advocates and stakeholders throughout the country know it, and the families and children who depend on CHIP will know it as well.

There is no reason for my colleagues to pit their righteous crusade on immigration against their righteous crusade for CHIP. This is simply a matter of priorities. Today, the priority should be to keep the government open and to ensure funding for CHIP well into the future.

As I said, offering my colleagues this advice may amount to stepping in the way of an opponent's mistake, but the politics on this issue must stop. The right answer in this case is pretty obvious. The right vote is one in favor of the House-passed continuing resolution.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in voting for this bill.

Look, I get so tired of the cheap politics that are played. When they are played on a bill like CHIP—virtually everybody is going to vote for it. Everybody agrees with or wants to agree with or has claimed credit for it. That makes you wonder what is going on.

I think I have the right to speak on this because I am the original author of CHIP. I wrote the original language. I was the one who got the committee to go for it. I was the one who went to Ted Kennedy—representing the Democrats—to come on board, and he did, and it brought both sides together. I am sure he is up there wondering, what is the matter with my side down there? And he ought to be.

It hasn't been easy to do all that, but we did it. It works. It has helped millions of children. It will help 9 million children now. It is something everybody in this Senate ought to be for and ought to quit playing games with. Unfortunately, some people think they can score points by playing games with something like CHIP. It is not only wrong, it is abysmal.

I love my colleagues. There are some I love more than others, but I love all of them. I have to say, the ones I love more than others are those who really are honest and deliberative, who really want to do what is right while they are here and who are willing to work with others to get there, who are willing to work in a bipartisan manner to be able to bring these things to pass.

I understand the differences between the two parties. I understand the poli-

tics that are constantly being played around here. But if we are going to play politics, play it on something other than CHIP. Play it on something that deserves the political ramifications. CHIP does not.

CHIP is something that we all know works and works in the best interests of our children. It is something that we as Federal employees can all work on and do, that we go home and feel really good about it and know we have done something really worthwhile. I can say that because I am the original author of the CHIP bill, and I have been for it ever since. I was the one who got Senator Kennedy to come on board and to help with it, and that brought a lot of Democrats on board, as well, because if Kennedy was on board, they could be on board. I was the one who got a lot of Republicans on board, like he was getting Democrats. In other words, the two of us made this system work—and not just the two of us but people in the House and other Senators here in the Senate. A lot of people deserve a lot of credit for the CHIP bill.

Now we are sitting here arguing about something that we shouldn't have to argue about. It is disappointing to me, and I am disappointed in the politics that are being played around CHIP. There are better arguments on other bills than there are on the CHIP bill. Everybody knows that CHIP is going to pass one way or the other, so naturally our friends on the other side—maybe even some on our side—want to hang whatever they can on the CHIP bill, knowing that the American people want it, that Senators want it, that the House of Representatives has proven that they want it, and they might be able to score a few political points.

Well, I want the two leaders to get together and get this matter resolved, and let's quit playing these silly games that are so often played around here. I don't mind them maybe on the bills that are lesser in import and nature, but to do it on the CHIP bill, my gosh, it is incredible to me.

This is the greatest country in the world, but we do have some really stupid people representing it from time to time. With that—I probably have gone too far saying that, but it is true, and it is disappointing to me.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, let me start by agreeing with the Senator from Utah that we should extend the Children's Health Insurance Program. We should do it for 6 years. I want to commend the Senator from Utah for his work in creating the CHIP program, along with Senator KENNEDY. It is good work, and we need to extend it.

We also have an obligation as Senators, on a bipartisan basis, to get together and put together a budget for the United States of America. We are now 4 months into the current fiscal

year, and we do not have a budget that provides the resources necessary for the Department of Defense. We do not have a budget that provides resources to fight the opioid epidemic. There has been a lot of talk here in the U.S. Senate about fighting the opioid epidemic, but we have no resources to do that. We need a budget to get that done.

So, yes, we should extend the Children's Health Insurance Program. We need to do that. But we also need to do our job—which we should have done back on October 1, the first day of this fiscal year—and actually adopt a bipartisan budget for the United States of America.

The tragedy right now is that at midnight tonight the government will shut down unless the Senate Republican leadership comes to its senses and supports a bipartisan budget agreement—a bipartisan agreement, which is really in plain sight right here in the U.S. Senate.

Look, the American people understand very clearly that Republicans control the White House, Republicans control both Houses of Congress, and with that comes a responsibility to govern for the good of the entire country and not focus on narrow, partisan interests. Instead, what we have here as the clock ticks is dysfunction and chaos.

Yesterday I heard the Republican leader, Senator MCCONNELL, say on the Senate floor that he would not support a bipartisan agreement, reached by Senators right here, unless he knew where President Trump stood on those issues. Then, in the same breath, he indicated he did not know where President Trump stood on those key issues.

The Senate is a separate and equal branch of the U.S. Government with its own constitutional responsibilities. We have a bipartisan agreement here on so many of these issues. We should not now be outsourcing our constitutional duties to a White House that, according to Senator MCCONNELL, doesn't know where it stands on these issues.

Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM had it right when he said that we don't have a reliable negotiating partner at the White House. And, in the last week, we heard President Trump's own Chief of Staff, General Kelly, acknowledge that the President was "uninformed" on some of the issues being debated here.

So let's do our job as the U.S. Senate, with our own responsibilities under the Constitution, and not say that we have to wait on a dysfunctional White House and not say that we have to wait on a President who once tweeted out that we need "a good government shutdown." There are no good government shutdowns, and we should be doing everything we can to avoid one at midnight tonight.

So let's actually do our job here, and let's come up with a budget for the United States for this fiscal year.

A small business could not survive without putting together its budget. It does great harm to our country and to

our government when this Congress cannot get its act together and put together a budget in time. We have now been kicking the can down the road month by month since October 1. That is why Senator GRAHAM said this morning: "I am not going to support continuing this fiasco for 30 more days. It's time Congress stop the cycle of dysfunction, grow up, and act consistent with the values of a great nation."

Amen to that. That is our constitutional duty. That is what we need to do in order to protect our military and other vital investments important to our country and our economy.

Here is what the Pentagon's chief spokesperson said about continuing resolutions: They are wasteful, they are destructive, and the longer they go the worse it is.

She went on to say that these continuing resolutions erode our defense capabilities and have negative consequences for them.

Why in the world do we want to kick the can down the road another 30 days when we can get it done right now and avert a government shutdown?

We need that budget to support our military. We also need it to support the critical investment in our kids' education. We need a budget plan that is going to provide veterans the healthcare they deserve. We need a budget that is going to fight the opioid epidemic—one that keeps community health centers open. The Social Security Administration has faced hundreds of millions of dollars of cuts. They are not going to be able to do their job in making sure folks get their Social Security benefits on time if we continue to strangle their budget.

The sad thing is, we have known about all of these issues since last September. I am glad we have come to some resolution on the issue of the Children's Health Insurance Program. We have known about that since last September. But we have also known about the need to fight the opioid epidemic. We have known about the need to fund community health centers. We have known about the need to make sure our veterans have the healthcare they deserve. And we have known about the need to address the DACA issue—the Dreamers—because it was last September when President Trump revoked the DACA Program, effective a very short time from now. That program had made sure that Dreamers could be here legally in the United States, contributing to our country. So when President Trump took that action, he manufactured the crisis we are in now.

But he also said: OK, I am going to revoke this legal status—this program—but I want Congress, on a bipartisan basis, to come up with a long-term solution. That is what he said back then, and he said the same thing just a few weeks ago. I think the Nation saw him on TV, when he invited a bipartisan group of Senators and Mem-

bers of the House to the White House, and he invited everybody to come up with a solution.

A number of our Senators, on a bipartisan basis, took the President up on his request. That is when Senator GRAHAM and Senator DURBIN and two other Republicans and two other Democrats came up with a plan, which now has very broad support, including the support of seven Republican Senators. So they did exactly what President Trump asked them to do, and they addressed all of the issues that President Trump outlined.

I think we know what happened after that. Senators GRAHAM and DURBIN went to the White House to present their bipartisan agreement to the President, and, meanwhile, he invited some other Senators over. They sabotaged the deal, and the President made repulsive, racist remarks at that meeting. So the President, who had asked Senators to come up with a solution on a bipartisan basis, when they did what he asked, threw it back in their face.

Why is the Republican leader, Senator MCCONNELL, now saying to the Senate that we can't do our job here until I know what is going to happen at the White House? Why should we be outsourcing our constitutional responsibilities to the White House when we have an agreement which, if it were put on the floor of the Senate today, would pass? It is a bipartisan solution.

I really believe it is time for us to do our job here, Republicans and Democrats alike.

Here is what President Trump said at the time of the last government shutdown. That is when we had a 16-day shutdown because some of the Republican Senators didn't want to fund the Affordable Care Act at the time and shut down the government for 16 days. Then Citizen Trump said: "It always happens to be the top. I mean, the problems start from the top and have to get solved from the top."

This is what Citizen Donald Trump was saying about President Obama at the time of the last shutdown.

He went on to say: "The president is the leader, and he's got to get everybody in a room, and he's got to lead."

How times change when Citizen Trump becomes President Trump. You have a White House in chaos, dysfunction. Senator GRAHAM himself said it: an unreliable negotiating partner.

Yet, the Republican leader wants this Senate to outsource our job to the President of the United States and says that we are going to shut down the government here because we don't know what President Trump thinks about all this. That is a dereliction of the duty of the Senate, and we need to do our job today and avoid a government shutdown.

The answer is in plain sight. Let's get to work. Let's get it done.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KENNEDY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, we are here today because Republicans and President Trump have failed in their most basic responsibility as the governing party, bringing us mere hours away from an unnecessary and consequential government shutdown.

Let's be clear. With Republicans in control of the White House, the Senate, and the House of Representatives, the only person to blame if the government shuts down will be President Donald Trump.

Later today, I plan to vote no on the government funding bill that the House of Representatives has sent over to the Senate because it provides no certainty or resolution for Dreamers, pensioners, veterans, the people of Puerto Rico, or vulnerable children and patients across the country. I cannot support legislation that fails to ensure that we are fulfilling our moral and constitutional obligation to the American people.

Sadly, this budget process is just a continuation of a pattern from Republicans in Congress: Draft major policy in secret, with no debate, no Democrats, no real opportunity to negotiate. First, they did it on healthcare. Then, they did it on tax reform. Now, they are doing it again on the continuing budget resolution.

There is a great song in the musical "Hamilton" titled "The Room Where It Happens." Well, the Democrats aren't even told where the room is. Republicans aren't negotiating deals. They are delivering fiats, not just to the Democrats but to the American people, and the American people are the ones paying the price.

We cannot let this craven, half-measure of a bill fool us. Yes, this legislation does finally reauthorize and fund a program that provides healthcare for 9 million children across this country, known as the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP. But remember, just like they are abdicating their role in governing today and have been throughout the budget negotiations, Republicans in Congress allowed CHIP to expire at the end of September—more than 100 days ago.

Why would Republicans do such a thing for a program they now say is so vital and bipartisan? Because 100 days ago the Republican caucus was preoccupied with their unsuccessful attempt at repealing the Affordable Care Act. For weeks on end, they held America in suspension as they secretly wrote and rewrote a bill that would rip healthcare coverage away from tens of millions of Americans while taking a machete to Medicaid.

Thankfully, this dangerous bill failed to gain support from enough Senate

Republicans to pass. But when that irresponsible bill failed, instead of immediately returning to the important business of providing low- and middle-income children healthcare, the Republicans decided to use their energy to jam through a massive tax scam with giveaways for millionaires and billionaires, once again leaving children's health and working families in limbo. Republicans were more interested in a tax bill of corporate welfare than in children's healthcare.

Congress provided a Band-Aid for CHIP at the end of last year, enough funding to support some States through today. Yet the absence of a real solution has consequences. CHIP families remain worried about paying for their children's medications, getting them a checkup, or receiving that unexpected, devastating, and expensive diagnosis for their young child. Healthcare providers remain terrified that they will have to cut services to medically complex children and other pediatric patients they serve. States still lack the certainty and assurances needed to fully operate CHIP for their residents. Many are still contemplating contingency plans should the Federal Government not meet their end of the bargain and provide funds needed for CHIP to succeed.

These last 100 days of anxiety and uncertainty represent uncharted territory for this popular program. For two decades, CHIP has provided affordable, comprehensive health insurance to children of working families and pregnant women. In 2016, CHIP covered nearly 9 million children throughout the United States. Some 2 million of them are chronically ill, with asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, or developmental disorders. In Massachusetts, CHIP has been instrumental in getting nearly all of our children covered.

Without continued Federal funding, Massachusetts alone could lose approximately \$295 million annually in Federal CHIP dollars. That would be devastating for the 172,000 Bay State children who rely on CHIP for their health coverage.

Ironically, over 3 months ago, Senate leaders in both parties came up with a bipartisan agreement on what the next 5 years of CHIP would look like. But Republicans insisted we had to pay for CHIP by raiding other important programs, like the Prevention and Public Health Fund, which is used to help prevent child illness by providing vaccines, among things. The stopgap funding measure passed in December cut \$750 million from the Prevention and Public Health Fund for a short-term spending patch. It was robbing Peter to pay Paul.

So we are hours away from shutting down the government, with the superrich still celebrating their \$1 trillion tax break and congressional Republicans still scheming at ways to cut Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, and still punting a solution for Dreamers, veterans, pensioners, and for

the people of Puerto Rico. While I remain supportive of the CHIP program, I do not support the legislative malpractice Republicans performed on the continuing resolution.

But that wasn't the first time Republicans tried to pay for one healthcare need with another, and CHIP is not the only victim of Republican political games. I cannot support the House legislation because it provides no funding to address the greatest public health crisis facing our Nation today—the opioid crisis.

When President Trump declared the opioid crisis a national public health emergency in October, he laid out his vision that “we can be the generation that ends the opioid epidemic.” On that, he is right. But we know that a vision without funding is a hallucination. We need real funding to implement real solutions.

The White House Council of Economic Advisers estimated that the opioid epidemic cost the country \$500 billion in 2015. How much has the Trump administration devoted to this crisis? Zero dollars, not a nickel, since Donald Trump was sworn in as President. Now there is news that the Trump administration might slash the budget of the Office of National Drug Control Policy by 95 percent. That isn't a commitment to the crisis. That is an abdication.

Asking our States, our cities, and towns to continue fighting this scourge of opioid overdoses without additional Federal funding is irresponsible, it is cruel, and it will come back to haunt us as a Nation. These budget negotiations were an ideal opportunity to fund what my colleagues in both parties have said publicly is important—combating the opioid crisis. Instead, we are leaving families without hope or help. We owe it to them and the millions like them across the country to fight as hard as possible for the funding they need.

We should also remember as we look at this House legislation that so many of the patients seeking treatment and recovery services for opioid addiction rely on their community health centers. But if this funding measure passes, Republicans will have irresponsibly and unfairly left funding for community health centers in limbo. That funding also expired more than 100 days ago.

For more than 50 years, community health centers have been an integral component of our social safety net. This movement, which started in Massachusetts, has transformed how we treat some of our most medically vulnerable citizens, while also improving the health and wellness of our communities. In fact, for many Americans, community health centers are the only access point for affordable healthcare. In Massachusetts, it treats more than 750,000 patients, and 16 percent of these patients are uninsured and nearly half are on Medicaid. In addition to the quality, comprehensive care they pro-

vide, community health centers play a key economic role in many regions across the country. Community health centers in Massachusetts have created more than 12,000 jobs, including more than 8,500 direct full-time employees. Much like CHIP, unfortunately, Republicans have denied community health centers the certainty of funding they need, forcing them to make tough decisions that ultimately impact their ability to fulfill their mission and care for the people of their communities.

I have heard from community health centers across the Commonwealth that Congress's inability to reauthorize funding has made new physicians reluctant to practice at their facilities, further straining an already depleting workforce. New staff to address burgeoning infectious health outbreaks, like the flu, cannot be hired, hampering the health center's ability to respond to the needs of the community.

These facilities are often the backbones of their communities, and for more than 100 days, we have been hamstringing their ability to do their jobs. It is shameful, and it is unacceptable.

Throughout the 100-day war on some of our most important healthcare programs, Democrats have been calling on Republicans to invite us into the room, to sit down on a bipartisan basis and work through our differences to come to a solution on CHIP, on community health centers, on opioid funding, and, of course, on our Dreamers. Instead, we are in a governmental paralysis, fixing only a fraction of the problems Republicans created while the President continues to focus on the campaign trail and fails in finding a solution for our country. For Republicans, this newest CR, yet again, means nothing more than “Can't Resolve.” The American people deserve so much more than that. The American people are tired of waiting on their government to do the right thing. Lives are depending on it. It has been 5 months since the fiscal year started, and we still don't have a budget. That is unacceptable.

Republicans are shedding crocodile tears about our military and national security being at risk during a government shutdown. Do you know what is harmful to our national defense—month-to-month budgets and operating by way of continuing resolutions. That is no way to run the Defense Department, but that is exactly what the Republicans have done with these short-term budget fixes. Spare me, spare America your crocodile tears because it is time to sit down, on a bipartisan basis, and get a budget done—a budget that would take care of the Defense Department, the opioid crisis, pensions, veterans, CHIP, community health centers, and it would give some certitude to the American people that this body knows how to govern. Instead of engaging in budget brinksmanship, we need Republicans and President Trump to engage in bipartisanship. It is time we end this waiting game now and provide

the certainty and funding necessary so all of these critical priorities are addressed, not just the ones Republicans care about.

The Republican paradox is that they don't believe in government, but they have to run for office in order to make sure the government doesn't work, and now that they control the House, the Senate, and Presidency, we have reached their perfect state where the government cannot work because it is being paralyzed by the party that controls all of these branches. They refuse to talk to Democrats. They refuse to ensure that the Constitution is implemented, where Democrats and Republicans, working together on both sides of this building, plus the President, sit down in the room in order to cut the deals. Until President Trump is willing to sit down with CHUCK SCHUMER and NANCY PELOSI and MITCH MCCONNELL and PAUL RYAN in the room, we will not get a resolution on these issues.

Mr. President, come to the Hill. Mr. President, sit down with all of the people who want to resolve these issues for the American people. Mr. President, do your job.

Bill Belichick says to the New England Patriots: If you want to win, do your job.

The same thing is true for you, Mr. President. Do your job. Come together with Democrats and Republicans. Stop carping critically from the outside at any move Democrats or Republicans make. Instead, get in the room. We can resolve these issues for the American people. The time is now, Mr. President. Do your job.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The able Senator from Utah.

MARCH FOR LIFE

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, today hundreds of thousands of Americans from all walks of life will participate in the 45th annual March for Life. This begs the question, Why do all these citizens march year after year? It certainly isn't for their health or for the media coverage. No, these Americans march on behalf of those who cannot. They march for uniquely vulnerable members of the human family. They march for the unborn, for those threatened by abortion, and for the countless millions of innocent lives already lost. These Americans march to protest the legal regime that sustains abortion.

The cornerstone of that crumbling edifice is *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 Supreme Court case that invented a right to abortion in the Constitution, and in so doing, it stripped the unborn of their right to life. The principal effect of *Roe v. Wade* on our culture has been to cheapen the value of humanity itself. *Roe* has insinuated into the law a poisonous notion, the notion that some human beings may be treated as things, as objects to be discarded when they are inconvenient. We have seen this before in human history, but an unintended effect of *Roe* has been to

kick-start a movement that has lasted four and one-half decades. *Roe* did not resolve the abortion debate, although it tried to. Rather, it intensified that very debate.

The Nation's conscience was not deadened by *Roe*'s euphemisms and evasions. Rather, it was brought to life. Like a firebell in the night, *Roe* awakened a generation of Americans to the injustice of abortion. Countless thousands of them are marching in Washington, DC, in Salt Lake City, and in cities all across the country today, but the institution of abortion still has its stalwart defenders—vociferous defenders even.

One may ask, Why does this issue arouse such anger and such passion, as it so often does? I argue that it is because the pro-life and pro-abortion movements offer competing and mutually inconsistent visions, moral visions for our society; indeed, competing arguments about human dignity and even about what it means to be human in the first place. Both moral visions are, in one sense, as old as the Nation. They have appeared in various guises throughout American history.

There is a consistent trend in how the clash of visions has played out in every era. The vision advanced by the pro-life movement has inspired righteous protests. The other vision has been used to rationalize hideous injustices. The pro-life vision embraces our country's noblest truth. The pro-abortion vision twists it.

Let me explain what I mean. Our Declaration of Independence contains some of the most succinct, profound, and revolutionary statements in human history. "We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness."

We know the United States has not always acted on this high principle. It has not always behaved in a manner consistent with it. We have, at times, denied life, liberty, and opportunity to our fellow beings in countless cruel and unfortunate ways, but even in the darkest times, patriots and reformers have looked to this passage as a guiding light because it is, in many respects, the conscience of our Nation.

Abraham Lincoln referred to the Declaration of Independence constantly in his speeches, calling it the "sheet anchor of American republicanism" and the "Father of all moral principle." He called the Declaration of Independence a statement on human equality, the "electric cord" that links Patriotic Americans through the ages. Now that electric cord has reached us. It is a direct line that runs from the founding generation to the very heart of the pro-life movement today. The core conviction of the pro-life movement is that "all men are created equal" and that all have a right to life. We believe that every human being has dignity and merits protection simply by virtue of being human.

You will often hear pro-lifers emphasize the human features of unborn children, as well we should. We point out that the human heart begins to beat as early as 16 days after conception. We point out that the unborn child can yawn, react to pain, and even suck her thumb. We point out that the thumb even has a unique one-of-a-kind fingerprint.

We don't mention these characteristics because they are what give children their worth. It is not our fingerprints or even our beating hearts or our ability to yawn that make us human, that make us people. Rather, we point to these characteristics because they in turn point to something far more fundamental. They point to the inescapable fact that the unborn child is a human being, just like us. It is that endowment, it is that shared humanity that gives us all moral worth.

To summarize the pro-life position, we have only to repeat those five words in the Declaration of Independence: "All men are created equal." All, therefore, are entitled to life, but to be sure, not everyone shares all men are created equal. At various times, this very belief that is so much at the core of who we are and what we believe as Americans has been called an "error[r] of the past generation." It has even been called a "self-evident lie!"

Few today would denounce the Declaration of Independence in such terms, but defenders of abortion still repudiate the declaration by their very actions and by the arguments they advance to protect abortion. Defenders of abortion no longer dispute that unborn children are living human beings. How could they? Science testifies unequivocally to our shared humanity. Most sophisticated defenders of abortion do not even dispute that abortion is a violent act.

If you don't believe me on this point, perhaps you will believe Ronald Dworkin, a prominent apologist for the pro-choice position: "Abortion," Dworkin writes, "[is] deliberately killing a developing human embryo." He goes on to describe abortion as a "choice[e] for death."

If abortion defenders do not deny the humanity of the fetus, and if they do not deny that abortion kills the fetus, how then do they defend abortion? In short, they do it by segregating the human family into two classes: human beings who are worthy of life—sometimes called human persons—and human beings who are unworthy of life, human nonpersons.

According to this view, human beings do not deserve protection on the basis of their humanity alone. Rather, they acquire the right to life when they attain certain characteristics—usually some level of cognitive ability or bodily development. Since the unborn lack these magical personhood qualities, they lack the right to life and may be dismembered in the womb. They are human nonpersons or so the argument goes.

There are many problems with this chilling view. It has been rebutted at length by smarter men and women than I. For the purposes of today, it is enough to point out the track record of this argument is dubious. It just so happens that every time mankind has been artificially divided into classes, into persons and nonpersons—based on their race, sex, genetic fitness, or any other attribute—the result has been calamity, which leads to a very simple question that has never been satisfactorily answered by abortion defenders: Why should we believe that this time is any different?

Abortion is a very difficult subject matter for so many reasons, but on another level, it is really quite simple. Our society has to choose between the two visions of human dignity described above.

Put simply, do we believe that all men are created equal or that some, perhaps, are somehow more equal than others?

This simple question deserves a simple response. We must choose the first of these options and affirm that all human beings are created with dignity, and we must reject all attempts to separate the human family into higher and lower classes. Let us see these attempts for what they are—cruel fictions that cheapen life itself.

Just as there is no such thing as life unworthy of life, there is no such thing as a human nonperson. There are just people, and we are each fearfully and wonderfully made.

Yes, dignity was ours before we stirred in the womb. It is stamped onto the very fabric of our genome. It is printed onto our souls. This is the truth so brilliantly proclaimed in our Nation's founding documents, even as it is denied by our legal system, starting with *Roe v. Wade*. Yet, even though the laws of man are against us for now, the truth is with us, and the truth can erode even the most formidable edifice of lies.

So, on this 45th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, let's respond to *Roe* as Frederick Douglass responded to a similar indignity in *Dred Scott v. Sandford*: "Happily for the whole human family," Douglass thundered, "their rights have been defined, declared, and decided in a court higher than the Supreme Court."

Those words are as true today as they were when they were spoken. They call on us to continue the winding march for justice and for life until the unalienable rights of every human being are respected in our land.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I come before my colleagues in the Senate to urge in the strongest possible terms that the Republican leadership here accept its responsibility and not allow the Government of the United States of America to shut down. Republicans control the Senate. They control the U.S. House. And a Republican is in the

White House. Please do not shut the government down.

A government shutdown will be extremely distressing and difficult for millions of people in every State in our country who utilize government services. A government shutdown will be extremely painful for millions of Federal employees who depend upon their paychecks to provide for their families. A government shutdown will make it much more difficult for U.S. military personnel, the men and women who are putting their lives on the line to defend us, to do their jobs.

The American people do not want a government shutdown. I do not want a government shutdown, and I believe that most of my Republican colleagues do not want a government shutdown. It is imperative that President Trump understand that despite what he said in May, that statement is wrong. When he said our country needs a good shutdown, that is wrong. Our country does not need a good shutdown. What we need is an annual budget that addresses the many needs of the American people.

Just last night, this is what a spokesperson from the Pentagon stated:

We have been working under a Continuing Resolution for three years now. Our current CR expires tomorrow, 19 Jan. This is wasteful and destructive. We need a fully-funded FY18 budget or face ramifications on our military.

This afternoon, I say to Senator MCCONNELL, the Republican leader here in the Senate: Please do not shut the government down. You know, Senator MCCONNELL, the political reality as well as anybody in our country. In the Senate, you need 60 votes to pass this budget agreement. You don't have 60 votes. Please, sit down with Democrats, and start negotiating in good faith. Please, do not shut the government down.

More and more Democrats are sick and tired of kicking the can down the road, tired of our not addressing the major crises that are facing this country, tired of running a \$4 trillion operation, which is what the U.S. Government is, on a month-to-month basis.

Yet it is not just the Democrats who are demanding that we finally have an annual budget. It is the Republicans as well. My understanding—what I have heard from the news media—is that there are now five Republicans who are prepared to vote against this continuing resolution and even more who have voiced deep concerns about the lack of an annual budget. They know and I know that just passing another temporary budget is totally irresponsible and is abdicating the job that we were elected to do.

What the American people understand—what every businessperson in this country understands, what every family in America understands—is that you cannot run a government, given the many crises that we face, on a month-to-month basis. We cannot continue to abdicate our responsibility.

Finally, we must address the problems that are facing the American people.

Last night, the Pentagon told us correctly—and I state again that this is what was said: "We need a fully-funded FY18 budget or face ramifications on our military."

Let's not forget that we are 3½ months into the fiscal year. There are 3½ months that have come and gone, and the Republican leadership here has still not given us an annual budget.

It is not just the military that faces a crisis situation because of the lack of an annual budget. Today, 27 million Americans get their primary healthcare, dental care, mental health counseling, and low-cost prescription drugs through the community health center program. In my State of Vermont, one out of four Vermonters gets his primary healthcare through a community health center. There are 3½ months that have come and gone since the beginning of this fiscal year, and the Republicans have not yet reauthorized funding for the community health center program, which is now facing a severe crisis in terms of recruiting and retaining the doctors, nurses, and other medical staff it needs to maintain the quality of service it must maintain.

What doctor or what nurse is going to go to a community health center when he or she doesn't even know if that facility is going to receive funding? There are 27 million Americans who depend upon community health centers. As I understand it—and I am glad—the Republicans are now prepared to reauthorize the CHIP program. There are 9 million kids who need that program. In the 3½ months that have come and gone, finally, they are talking about reauthorizing CHIP. That is good, but you cannot forget the community health centers.

The community health center program in this country is 50 years old. It was developed in the 1960s. It is supported by virtually every Democrat and, I think, the vast majority of the Republicans. Yet it has not been reauthorized. This is a crisis that cannot be kicked down the road. It has to be addressed and addressed now.

On Veterans Day, everybody here goes running all over the country, giving great speeches about how much they love the veterans, but the Veterans Health Administration cannot continue to provide decent, quality care to those of our veterans who put their lives on the line to defend us when they have over 30,000 vacancies. In Vermont and around the country, the VA provides good, quality care, but you cannot provide care in a timely manner when you have 30,000 vacancies at the VA. This issue cannot be kicked down the road. It must be addressed now, not next year.

As everybody knows, in Louisiana and in Vermont and all over this country, there is a horrible, horrific opioid and heroin epidemic that is sweeping this country. It has hit my State of

Vermont hard. It has hit States all over America. Last year, 60,000 people in our country died as a result of opioid or heroin overdoses. We need to help State governments, local communities, families, and police departments to address the opioid and heroin epidemic. This is a crisis that cannot be kicked down the road. It must be addressed now, not through a continuing resolution that absolutely ignores this crisis. It must be addressed now.

Last year, unbelievably, some 10,000 people with disabilities died while awaiting decisions for the applications they made to the Social Security Administration for their disability benefits to be approved. People with disabilities apply for benefits. They wait, they wait, and they wait. Last year, 10,000 people with disabilities died while waiting for decisions. Many of them died because the Social Security Administration is, today, grossly underfunded, understaffed, and simply not able to deal with the volume of claims they have received.

It is not just people with disabilities. In my State of Vermont—I hear this every day—there are older Americans who are not getting the quality of service they need from the Social Security Administration. Our job is to adequately fund the Social Security Administration so it can protect the needs of senior citizens and people with disabilities in our country. This is a crisis that cannot be kicked down the road. It has to be addressed now, and this continuing resolution, which I presume we are going to vote on later today, does not deal with it.

Mr. President, 1½ million Americans are in danger of seeing their pensions cut by up to 60 percent. These are truckdrivers, construction workers, machinists, and others who have worked their entire careers with the expectation that they would receive a decent pension when they retired. We have a responsibility to protect the pensions of these hard-working Americans and keep the promises that were made to them. This is another crisis that cannot be kicked down the road. It has to be addressed now, and the continuing resolution that is going to come before us has not one word to say about that.

Then we have a child care crisis in this country. Millions of working families can't find quality, affordable child care. We have a student debt crisis in this country—40 million people, many of them deeply in debt, unable to get on with their lives for the crime of having gone to college. That is a crisis that we have to deal with. We have an infrastructure crisis in this country. All over America, roads, bridges, water systems, waste water plants are collapsing. How do we continue to ignore those crises? At a time of massive income and wealth inequality, when the rich are getting richer and everybody else is getting poorer, our job in Congress is not just to give tax breaks to billionaires. Our job is not just to try

to throw 32 million Americans off the health insurance they have or deny the reality of climate change or to end net neutrality or make racist comments about countries throughout the world. Our job is to represent the needs of ordinary Americans. We cannot continue to ignore these problems. We cannot continue to kick the can down the road.

Once again, I say to the majority leader: Let us begin to negotiate in good faith. Let us reach decisions that will improve life for the American people, not simply ignore their needs.

When we talk about the crises facing this country, we are also talking about a crisis precipitated by President Trump in September of last year. As a result of President Trump's rescinding of President Obama's Executive order on DACA, some 800,000 young people in our country are today living in fear, uncertainty, and anxiety. If we do not act—and act now—it is possible that many of these young people will lose their legal status and be subjected to the possibility of deportation. This must not be allowed to happen.

This issue to my mind is one of the great moral issues of our time. These young people, who were brought into this country, some at 2 years of age, 3 years, 5 years of age, are people who have lived virtually their entire lives in the United States of America. They are working, they are in school, they are in the military, and 20,000 of these young DACA people are now teaching in schools throughout the country.

It would be one of the cruelest acts in modern American history or our history in general if we said to these young people, who know no other country but the United States of America, that they could be deported from our shores. It would be an unspeakable crime, and we must not allow that to happen. That is not just the opinion of Senator BERNIE SANDERS; that is the overwhelming point of view of the American people, of Democrats, Republicans, and Independents.

A poll just came out last night from CBS. The poll showed that 87 percent of the American people believe that we should protect the legal status of the Dreamers—87 percent—and that poll is consistent with poll after poll after poll. The people of the United States across the political spectrum are saying that we cannot turn our backs on these Dreamers. The vast majority of people believe we must provide a path toward citizenship.

There is now bipartisan legislation that has been written by Senator DURBIN, Senator GRAHAM, and others, and I say to Senator MCCONNELL: If 87 percent of the American people think we should provide legal status to the Dreamers, let us do our job. Let us pass this legislation. This is not a profile in courage. This is what the American people want, and let us do what the American people want.

As we well know, terrible, terrible hurricanes struck Texas, Florida, Puer-

to Rico, and the Virgin Islands months and months ago, and people there are still suffering. Many people in Puerto Rico today still do not have electricity. Then there are devastating wildfires and mud slides that have taken place in California. How long does it take for this Congress to respond to the crises facing our fellow Americans?

What I say is, we were elected to do our jobs in representing the American people. That is what we are paid to do. We cannot run a government on a month-to-month basis. Senator MCCONNELL does not have the 60 votes he needs, and now is the time for him to sit down with the Democratic leadership and negotiate a serious agreement on the budget situation, on parity between defense and nondefense spending. Negotiate a serious agreement on DACA, providing legal status and a path toward citizenship for our 800,000 young people; negotiate a serious agreement on disaster relief.

The truth of the matter is, we can do it. We can do it. The differences of opinion are not that wide, but we cannot do it and will not do it unless we finally sit down and start negotiating in a serious manner. That is what I implore Senator MCCONNELL to do.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MARCH FOR LIFE

MR. THUNE. Mr. President, today, as they do every year at this time, tens of thousands of Americans from across the country, including from my home State of South Dakota, will march from the National Mall to the U.S. Supreme Court to stand up for the right to life. The march is always inspiring with the huge crowds who come year after year, the commitment and enthusiasm of the participants, and most of all, the young people—teenagers, college students, young adults.

Abortion has been an ugly scar on our Nation for a long while now, but seeing all these young people at the March for Life every year fills me with hope because I know that these young people get it. They know that life matters, and they are ready and willing to stand up and say that, to stand up for the hundreds of thousands of unborn Americans who are killed every year in this country by abortion.

This year, I hope to see Congress consider the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act. This legislation would protect unborn children who have reached the age of 20 weeks—that is 5 months of pregnancy—from being killed by abortion. Right now, there are only seven countries in the world that allow elective abortion after 20 weeks of pregnancy. Among those

countries are China, North Korea, and the United States of America. I would like to suggest that is not the company Americans want to be keeping when it comes to protecting human rights.

Mr. President, 63 percent of the American people support a ban on abortion after 20 weeks of pregnancy, and that doesn't surprise me. Take a look at a 5-month-old unborn baby on an ultrasound. It is pretty darn obvious that is a human being in there. I think most people instinctively know that human beings, no matter how small they are, are worthy of protection.

Five months into a pregnancy, babies are doing a lot. They are sucking their thumbs. They are yawning and stretching. They are actively moving around. They are responding to noises, and they feel and respond to pain. The scientific evidence on this point is clear: 5 months into a pregnancy, unborn babies feel pain. Yet, in our country, it is legal to abort these babies. The procedures used to perform these abortions are so brutal and inhuman that it is difficult to even talk about them. Most Americans would rightly shrink from treating an animal the way we treat unborn human beings.

Every year, there are hundreds of thousands of abortions in this country. Planned Parenthood reports that it performed 321,384 abortions in 2016. That number is so large that it is hard to fathom. To put that into some kind of perspective, that is equivalent to more than one-third of the population of my home State of South Dakota. Unfortunately, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act would not eliminate all of these abortions, but it would make a difference, and it would bring us one step closer to the day when every child born and unborn is protected in law.

To all those who are marching for life today, thank you for being here. Thank you for reminding all of us about an injustice that it is all too easy for us to ignore. Thank you for standing up for all those babies. The fight may be long, but I know that at the end of the day, it is life that will win.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARDIN. 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. CARDIN. Mr. President, before coming to Washington today, I went to Annapolis. The Maryland General Assembly is in session. I had a chance to meet with several of our regional delegations in the Maryland General Assembly, our senators and members of the house, and obviously the question that was asked the most is, What is happening in regard to the Federal Government? What is happening in re-

gard to the fiscal year 2018 budget? Will the government be funded past midnight tonight?

I must tell you, I was talking to both Democratic and Republican members of the Maryland General Assembly, and there was a common concern. You see, the Maryland General Assembly will shortly be receiving from Governor Hogan the fiscal year 2019 budget. A good part of any State's budget is the Federal funding programs. Neither the State of Maryland nor any of our local jurisdictions had the fiscal year 2018 budget, let alone a blueprint for likely action by Congress for the fiscal year 2019 budget.

The budget should have been passed by October 1 of last year. That is the beginning of the fiscal year. We have been operating under continuing resolutions during the entire part of this year. In fact, we have been operating under continuing resolutions for years, and it is causing significant damage to this country.

The Republicans control the House, the Senate, and the White House, and they can't pass a budget for our country. So when the Republican leadership asked us in September of last year for a continuing resolution to have more time to negotiate a budget for fiscal year 2018, we had no choice but to go along with the continuing resolution to give more time. But then on three additional occasions the Republican leadership has come forward saying: We need additional time.

I remember the debate we had in December before the holidays. The leadership was very clear that this would be the last continuing resolution that was going to be needed. They were close to working out deals, et cetera, only to find out today that we are still no closer to getting it resolved.

Here is the tragedy: Our agencies cannot exist on continuing resolutions. They hit a point where they are no longer able to carry out their mission in the best interests of the American people. We heard that last night on the floor of the Senate when the representative of the Department of Defense indicated that our Nation's preparedness, readiness, cannot be maintained by a continuing resolution with last year's budget.

You see, a continuing resolution does not reflect our current priorities. It is where we were the last time we passed the budget, which was over a year ago. Those are the spending priorities an agency must comply with.

For the Department of Defense, a lot has happened during that period of time. Look at what is happening in North Korea. Look at what is happening with Russia. Look at what is happening around the world. Our Department of Defense needs to have a current-year budget, not another continuing resolution. We have to reach this decision.

So here is our concern: If we just continue to go along with these continuing resolutions, we are going to hurt our

national security. We are going to hurt our agencies' ability to get their work done. It is going to cost the taxpayers of this country more money, and they are not going to get the services they need.

To me, there is an alternative to this date that we need to consider, and that is, let's complete our work. I know we have a deadline of midnight tonight. I know the government will shut down unless we get something done. I must tell you, we should make sure the government stays open. No one wins when there is a government shutdown. But we are not doing anyone any favors if we don't commit ourselves to get the job done.

What I would urge Leader McCONNELL to do is to allow us to vote on a very short-term continuing resolution and keep us here over this weekend; keep us here until we get the basics of the fiscal year 2018 budget complete. That, we can do.

We know that there have been reported conversations between the leadership on the Appropriations Committee and the leadership in the Senate and that there is a deal here. There is a deal that can be made, but we have to have a deadline.

Here is the danger of another long-term CR, another month CR, without having that. We hear that there is a group in the House of Representatives that is controlling the debate over there. They don't represent a majority in the House—far from it. They certainly don't represent the views of the majority of the Members of the U.S. Senate or the American people. But unless we have a deadline now and get this done, we are going to be faced with the same concerns a month from now, and we are not going to be able to get a budget done so that we can deal with the problems of this country.

We should not have a shutdown. All of us should be committed to pass a short-term CR to keep us here and avoid a government shutdown. Everyone loses on a shutdown.

I have the honor of representing one of the largest numbers of Federal employees of any State in the country. Maryland is the proud home to many incredibly important Federal facilities and installations and many talented Federal workers who are on the front-line of public service. They work very hard for the American people every single day. I am proud to represent them in the U.S. Senate.

Our Federal workforce has already sacrificed on behalf of our budget. They have gone through too many continuing resolutions that compromise their ability to get the job done. They have gone through too many threats of sequestration, too many pay freezes or pay adjustments that are inadequate, at additional costs to their pensions. They have contributed. What they expect from us is to keep the government open and to give them a budget so that they can get their mission done.

For the sake of our Federal workforce, let's keep the government open.

It is a real hardship if we miss this deadline. It is not without cost. Let me make that clear to my colleagues.

If there is a government shutdown, hard-working Federal workers aren't going to get a paycheck, yet they still have to make their mortgage payments and support their families. Those who are not excepted will go on unpaid leave. That is wrong.

People who depend on Federal contracts in order to keep their businesses going will not have that assurance and will be faced with the prospect of laying off workers.

Individuals who need government services are going to find it much more difficult, if not impossible, to be able to get those Federal services, whether it is tracking down a check they desperately need, getting the type of assistance they need in order to process a concern with the VA, or whether it is a matter of security and they need to contact our government. All of that is going to be put at risk, and the taxpayers of this country will be left holding the bill.

We have gone through government shutdowns before, and we have done analyses each time, and every time it costs the taxpayers more. It costs the taxpayers more.

All of us who are concerned about fiscal responsibility need to find a path forward to make sure we don't shut down the Federal Government. It makes no sense.

I have introduced legislation that I urge my colleagues to make sure we pass. You may be surprised to find out that if we miss the deadline and we go a few days and then we get it done, those Federal workers who are put on furlough will not be paid for our negligence in not keeping the Federal Government open. That is not right. Each time we have corrected that by legislation, but there shouldn't be that uncertainty for the Federal workforce.

I urge my colleagues to pass the legislation I have authored. I have the support of over 20 of my colleagues who have cosponsored this legislation to make sure that our Federal workforce knows they will receive their full compensation.

It is also important that we move forward on getting this budget done and getting work done. If we just take the House's approach and we say "OK, everything is fine," we will be back in 28 days, and we will see this movie again. We have issues that cannot wait to be resolved. We have to resolve these issues.

There are a lot of issues out there, but the one that has gotten a good deal of attention is the Dreamers. This shouldn't be a problem. I agree with some of my colleagues who say: Where is the problem? Well, the problem was created by the President of the United States last September when he set a 6-month deadline on the removal of the Dreamers.

We didn't have a problem until then. We needed to fix our immigration sys-

tem; don't get me wrong. But we didn't have a date on the backs of individuals who know no other country but the United States. As to their shelf life here in the United States, we didn't have that until the President initiated this problem.

When the President did that in September, I applauded colleagues on both sides of the aisle, Democrats and Republicans, who said: Let us come together and fix it in the legislation. We need that, and I agree with that. We should have legislation for the Dreamers, so they have a pathway to citizenship and know that America is their home and their future is here. That should be done.

We had bipartisan legislation ready to go. We were ready to move forward on it, only to find out that while the President said that he was for legislation, he then said: Well, we have to deal with other issues. I have this wall I am concerned about and border security I am concerned about.

So the bipartisan group entered into good-faith negotiations with the President, and they narrowed the issues that needed to be resolved to a few. They talked about border security. They talked about the issues concerning the family and family reunification and dealing with the lottery system on diversity visas. They took up those issues, and they reached a bipartisan agreement as requested by the President and, they thought, with support of the President of the United States. Yes, it does protect the Dreamers, and I am proud to say it also protects those in temporary protected status.

Maryland has a large population from El Salvador and Haiti that are on TPS status. They are all protected under this compromise that was reached. Everybody thought "Oh, my goodness, we have finally resolved this issue; we can go on to the next issue," only to find that the President of the United States flipped his position on it.

I want to be engaged with the President. As the majority leader said, he has to sign bills. I get it. But it is tough to negotiate with someone who tells you one thing on one day and then does the exact opposite on the next day.

We have a responsibility to act. We have a bill that is bipartisan and has enough support to clearly pass the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives. It protects the Dreamers. It protects those with TPS status, and it deals with border security. We need to get that done now also.

We all know we have healthcare extenders that need to be completed in addition to CHIP. CHIP is very important to get done. It should be made permanent, I might tell you. We also have community health centers and many other issues that need to be dealt with in this legislation.

We have disaster relief. We have talked about this many times. We come together as a nation to help those who have been distressed through nat-

ural disasters—the people of Texas and Florida and Puerto Rico and those who have been affected by the wildfires.

Then, of course, the issue I hear the most about is the opioid crisis. We need to make sure that the Federal partnership is strong to deal with this national crisis.

What should we do? Well, let's work together. I must tell you, my constituents, your constituents are not interested in a blame game. They are interested in making sure that their Federal workers have a check to pay their mortgage payments. If they are in need of VA services, they want to make sure those services are available to them. They want to make sure they are getting the best value for their tax dollar, and they want the U.S. Senate and the Congress to work and resolve these issues.

They expect us to pass a budget, and they expect us to deal with these issues. We have a game plan to get all that done in a matter of days if we make the commitment to get it done. That is why I have suggested to the majority leader that there is support for us to stay and get the job done. Keep us in session. Keep government open, and we will get the work done.

Let us come together with a truly bipartisan budget that reflects the will of the American people and the input of all Members of the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives, a budget that makes sense for our Department of Defense, makes sense for those doing the research at the National Institutes of Health, those who are keeping our food safe at FDA, and those who are on the frontlines of the Social Security Administration, handling the issues of our seniors. Let's give them the tools they need in a budget that makes sense for this country.

Let's make sure that we pass these open issues that are urgent, some of which have been created by the President, such as the immigration issues. We have a path forward to resolve those issues now. Let's do that. If we do all of that, then we really are serving the interests of the American people.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle that our first responsibility is to the people of this country. Let's not blame each other. Let's stay together and do something that we don't do enough of: Let's listen to each other. Let's get our work done, keep the government open, and do what is right for the American people.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President and colleagues, Chairman HATCH was on the

floor a bit ago talking about the Children's Health Insurance Program. Because his remarks were greatly misleading, I thought it was important—having heard my good friend, my longtime friend, earlier, I thought it was important to come to the floor this afternoon and set the record straight about the Children's Health Insurance Program.

The fact is, the chairman and I did negotiate an important Children's Health Insurance Program extension back in September—bipartisan—and I put in a lot of time, both inside this Congress and outside the Halls of Congress, in order to line up bipartisan support for that effort. And we did, in fact, in the Finance Committee, have near unanimous bipartisan support. That was months and months ago.

The fact is, at that point, the Children's Health Insurance Program could have passed the Congress within days, but unfortunately the Republicans in the other body had some other ideas. From the moment the Senate Finance Committee passed the bill in a bipartisan way, the kids became hostage to the Republican political agenda.

First, the House Republicans tried to force ideological cuts in important health programs, including Medicare, in order to allow this deal to go forward. Then they conditioned helping the vulnerable kids on kicking Americans off their private health insurance. When that didn't work, they took yet another hostage: vaccines and preventive health. For some reason, the other body, the House, wanted to cut off programs that make Americans healthier by preventing disease in the first place. For obvious reasons, Democrats weren't willing to sacrifice that hostage, either.

Now, months after there was a bipartisan deal to finally give peace of mind to these parents and children, the House Republicans have taken yet another hostage. This time, we are talking about the proper functioning of the Federal Government.

The Republicans have been stumbling from one continuing resolution to another continuing resolution since they took power, sacrificing the readiness of the military, impeding the Federal response to natural disasters, and handicapping rural hospitals that don't know when they are going to get paid for the care they provide. We are not going to sacrifice this hostage, either.

The minority leader, Senator SCHUMER, has made a good-faith offer to give the Senate a week to actually come to an agreement to keep the government functioning. I think this makes sense because the cycle of destructive, nakedly political, bad-faith governing can't continue.

What we have is a display of the worst of American politics. The fact is, Republicans control the White House, the Senate, and the House of Representatives. That means that you get to set the agenda, and you get to set the schedule. But Republican leaders

watched and did nothing as the deadline for CHIP funding passed in the fall. So what we had at the end of the year was this picture of how millions of American kids were lower on the list of the Republican priorities than borrowing \$1.5 trillion in order to give additional money to multinational corporations and the political donor class, when the multinational corporations were already awash in cash.

Since the fall, there has been a near constant stream of Republicans appearing on television and in print saying again and again that they are all for the Children's Health Insurance Program—by God, they just want to take care of the kids. The fact is, those Republicans speaking out on television had months to act. They had almost a year. The program expired 111 days ago, and the Finance Committee passed a bipartisan bill that really kicked this all off. I felt very strongly about doing that. The chairman has a long history of working on it, and I wanted to make sure that we were coming right out of the box and getting a strong, bipartisan bill, knowing that perhaps the chairman of the committee would retire. So if there was an up-or-down vote on the Children's Health Insurance Program in the Senate after we moved last fall, it would have gotten 80 votes—probably more—and probably 300 votes in the other body, if that bipartisan measure that came out of the Finance Committee in the fall had had an up-or-down vote. The fact is, the only reason that hasn't happened is the cynical political strategy which I have described that evolved over the months since the Finance Committee acted in a bipartisan way and which has produced this crisis this body faces now.

Even the President, apparently in a moment of unsupervised so-called executive time, said that a long-term CHIP bill ought to move forward unobstructed.

A few weeks ago, the Congress learned—and I made a special push for this because it was clear, as a result of these ill-advised changes that were part of the tax bill, that coverage would be more expensive in the private exchanges and that CHIP would look like an even better investment than it already was. As a result of that information we obtained, it, in fact, saves money to make the Children's Health Insurance Program permanent. Making it permanent, as amazing as it sounds, is a better deal than a 6-year extension and less of an expense for the taxpayers.

True fiscal conservatives, in my view, ought to be tripping over themselves in order to pass a permanent Children's Health Insurance Program without preconditions. Yet, at every turn in this program for the future of so many vulnerable kids—9 million kids—what we saw was not action but Republican leaders taking yet another hostage.

So I want to be clear. I think what we have seen over the last few months

is the exploitation of children by the governing party here in the Nation's Capital. It is wrong. It is causing needless panic among millions of families who are caring for sick kids. This is a crisis made over the last few months by the governing party here in Washington, and it ought to end here, today, with the governing party, the Republicans, releasing the hostage, passing—all of us together—a clean, very short spending bill that would allow this continuing resolution nonsense to end once and for all.

I believe it is in the country's interest to have a permanent extension of the Children's Health Insurance Program. It is an extension that saves the taxpayers money. What you do by making this program permanent is you give more youngsters in America the opportunity for better health, which gives them more opportunity to achieve their full potential in the years ahead.

I will close with this. More than anything else, what I have tried to do is dedicate my time in public service to working in a bipartisan way on healthcare. I have always felt that healthcare was the most important issue. I was director of the senior citizens for almost 7 years. The group was called the Gray Panthers. I ran the legal aid office. I decided then that if you and your loved ones—my good friend, the Presiding Officer, has worked with me and did such good work with us on the veterans bill, another important issue—I always felt that if you and your family didn't have your health, then everything else didn't matter. You couldn't go to the football game. You couldn't find a way to pick up a new skill and have some exciting job options in the future because if you didn't have your health, it went by the board.

Everything I have tried to do in healthcare—everything—I have tried to say ought to be bipartisan. Usually there is a set of options for finding common ground. So often, for example, I felt that my party was right about wanting to expand coverage because if you don't get everybody covered, you have a lot of cost-shifting and not much prevention. I thought Republicans had some valid points, as well, with respect to a role for the private sector.

When it came time to get the Children's Health Insurance Program extended and do it in a bipartisan way, I was very pleased to meet the chairman of our committee, my friend Senator HATCH, in a bipartisan way for a long-term extension with additional funds. That could have been done in the fall. Yet, over the months since then—I have described all of the hurdles, all of the obstacles that Republicans have put in front of making that bipartisan effort, which, as I just indicated, has gotten even more attractive with the new estimates that permanent extensions save money. Republicans have made it harder to take that bipartisan

work, which was part of what I have always thought was the way to do health policy, in the fall and make it law. There is still time to do that. The way we are going to do it is not through the kinds of misleading statements, unfortunately, we heard this morning on the floor. We are going to do it by working in a bipartisan fashion.

With that, I yield the floor.

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

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

REMEMBERING GEORGE BROWN

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I try to get down on the Senate floor every week and talk about someone in my State who is making or who has made our State a better place for all of us. It is, actually, one of my favorite parts of the whole week. I know the pages really enjoy it. It is what I call our Alaskan of the Week. It is one of the most fulfilling things that I do.

No doubt, many here in the Chamber and people watching from home and from up in the Gallery have seen pictures or television shows about Alaska. Hopefully, they have been up there. My State has captured the country's imagination. There are cable shows on Alaska, wonderful shows, and for good reason. There is so much about Alaska that is awe-inspiring—our long expanses of tundra, mountain ranges, glaciers, our salmon-filled streams. To everybody watching back home or listening, we want them to go to Alaska if they haven't already been or to go again. It will be the trip of a lifetime, I guarantee you. Yet a State is different from a community. A State is where people go, and a community is where people live. It takes good, strong, and generous people to build a community.

This week, I recognize someone in Alaska who spent his entire adult lifetime building community. His name was George Brown, who, with his wife, Peggy, had run one of the most popular diners—one of the greatest restaurants in Anchorage—since 1955. The Lucky Wishbone is that place that for decades, people from all walks of life have gone—veterans, politicians, oil workers, hospital employees. You name it, they have gone to the Lucky Wishbone. They have converged on this wonderful establishment in Anchorage for some of the best fried chicken and best strawberry shakes ever. I guarantee it if you go. I know from firsthand experience. Trust me.

George Brown was born in rural Wisconsin in 1922. He joined the National Guard at the tender age of 17, and his unit was sent to Alcatraz Island to guard the Golden Gate Bridge. At 21, he had already risen to the rank of master sergeant when he qualified for Officer

Candidate School. In 1943, he finished flight school at Luke Field, AZ, as a second lieutenant in the Army Air Corps. In that same year, George met the love of his life, Peggy, and married soon after.

After he was married, George received orders to fly B-24s across the Himalayas during World War II—a mission in an area famously known simply as the Hump. George earned the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal for his bravery and service during World War II.

Incidentally, the late, great Senator Ted Stevens from Alaska, whose desk I occupy here on the floor, also flew the Hump with the Army Air Corps during World War II, and I know he was a friend of George's.

After the war, George and Peggy and their two children made their way to Alaska to forge a new life. Eventually, that life took shape in a building that George built by hand in downtown Anchorage—the Lucky Wishbone. Its doors opened on November 30, 1955, and a kind of living room for the community—where you could also get great food—was born in Anchorage.

As you know, most walls don't talk, but the walls of the Lucky Wishbone do talk. They are filled with pictures that chart Anchorage and Alaska's history throughout the decades. These photos tell the story of a hardscrabble territory—Alaska—that fought for self-determination and gained citizenship and statehood in 1959. They tell a story of the town of Anchorage, rebuilt after being hit by the most powerful earthquake ever recorded in North America—9.2 on the Richter scale. It lasted for 5 minutes. The walls of the Lucky Wishbone tell the story of a State brimming with excitement when the largest oilfield in North America, Prudhoe Bay, was discovered on the North Slope, and tens of thousands of jobs were created for Alaskans and Americans. They tell the story of the crash in oil prices in the 1980s and of the hard and long recovery. They tell the story about how, through it all, a community and our citizens in Alaska relied on each other.

As all of this history was in the making, George and his wife, Peggy—who by then had four children—went to work every day. They knew their customers by name, and they continued to make the best food in town.

Sadly, Peggy died in 2011 after she and George celebrated 67 years together. George continued to go to work every day. I saw him there. He continued to fly his plane until he was 94 years old—a wonderful, gracious, tough, patriotic Alaskan and a great American.

George passed away earlier this week—an amazing life. He was 96 years old. He left behind two of his four children—Patricia and Corky—lots of grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

The Lucky Wishbone, one of his many legacies, will live on. This great

restaurant has now been passed down to his daughter Patricia and two long-term employees. George and Peggy's memory will also live on with them.

Mr. President, in a few hours, we are likely going to have a simple choice to make here on the Senate floor—to either pass the House's continuing resolution that passed yesterday so as to continue to fund our government and our military and, importantly, to reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program, CHIP, for 6 years or to shut down the Federal Government. Yet, if you are watching the Senate floor debates about all of this from home or in the Gallery, you might be a bit confused. Actually, I was almost confused last night. Particularly, if you were listening to the minority leader and minority whip's new talking points that they were using last night in their remarks and have been using over the past few days, you might really be confused. Let me give you a little background as to why.

Like the Presiding Officer—actually, more than the Presiding Officer. He has been around the Senate for quite some time. As someone who is relatively new, I sit in that Presiding Officer's chair a lot—as a matter of fact, during the 11 a.m. hour on Wednesdays and Thursdays—so I get to listen to the majority and minority leaders and the majority and minority whips give their opening statements. A couple of times a week, I watch it on C-SPAN—like a lot—and you get to hear the different priorities of the different leaders of the parties. Every day, I hear this. I respect everybody, and I respect our Members on the other side of the aisle, as we all have different areas that we focus on. I will tell you this, rebuilding the military, increasing military readiness, increasing defense funding has not been a key area of focus for the minority leader or minority whip. It is just a fact—not bad or good—just a different priority.

I also sit on the Armed Services Committee and the Veterans Affairs' Committee, and there is a lot that we focus on in those committees, particularly Armed Services, and a lot of us have been concerned about the dramatic cuts in spending. From 2010 to 2016, the military has been cut by 25 percent, even though we have had a dramatic increase in national security challenges.

There is a certain group of Senators, I would say led by the Senator from Arizona, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, Mr. McCAIN, who focus on military issues, military readiness, increasing funding for the troops, who really care about these issues and focus on them daily. I consider myself one of them—a lot of Republicans, some Democrats. The Members of this body know who they are, and we focus on this a lot. Imagine my surprise yesterday and last night when the minority whip and the minority leader started with new talking points emphasizing that this impasse we are

getting ready to see here and the impending possible shutdown is all about their concerns about the military. Their concerns about the military? How the CR was going to hurt the military? Well, with all due respect, that is the first time in 3 years that I have heard the leadership of the other party really emphasize that issue. Again, I have a lot of respect for these men, but they just don't talk about this issue. They don't. That is what they were doing. That is the new talking point. This isn't about something else, it is about our troops.

Well, I think the newest talking points are something that is trying to confuse the American people. Don't be confused by this. These are not the Senators who come out every day and battle for more spending for our troops. These are not the Senators who come down and care about readiness. The new talking points are a little bit hard to swallow.

What was also surprising last night is that the new talking points—how little the minority leader talked about actually the real issue—the real issue, and it is a serious issue. Everybody in this body and everybody in this city knows it is the real issue. Here it is. The other side is saying, unless there is a deal on the DACA issue—which is a serious issue—they will shut down the government. That is the real issue. There is no debating it. It is not about the minority leader's newfound concern about military readiness. That is the issue we are debating.

Now, I think it is a serious issue, the Dreamers. I have met with them. We have about 150 in Alaska. I think we need to help those young men and women. They are great Americans—not Americans yet, but they are great young people. We also need to focus on border security and immigration reform. I certainly want to help them.

Here is the final point. What was missed last night is this talk about—we heard the minority leader saying the CR is going to be bad for the military. A continuing resolution is bad for the military—again, a newfound focus on the military. I hope he joins us as part of the number of Senators who really care and focus on military readiness and defense spending every day, not just last night. What is worse for the military beyond the continuing resolution—and a continuing resolution is bad—but what is worse, there is no doubt about it, the Deputy Secretary of Defense said it today, is a shutdown of the government.

A shutdown of the government really hurts the military. I want to encourage my colleagues, let's not do that. Let's not do that. We will definitely be hurting the military then. Let's get back to work. Let's fund the government. Let's pass this continuing resolution. Let's pass the reauthorization to CHIP, which a lot of my colleagues, in the last several months, have been saying we need to do. I agree. Let's do it tonight. Let's find a resolution for the

border security, DACA, and immigration issues that we can get to a bipartisan agreement on.

What we shouldn't be doing here is coming down with new talking points about how much the minority leader cares about military readiness and military funding, when, to be truthful, that is the first I have heard in 3 years an emphasis in that area. Let's fund the military, certainly. Let's fund the government, but let's not shut down the government tonight. That is not going to help anyone, and it certainly—certainly—is not going to help our troops.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, before I get into my prepared remarks I want to say, we have been at war for 16 years, and the Senator from Alaska is correct, we do need to rebuild our military. There is no ifs, ands, or buts about it. It is not something that just came about last night. It is something we should have been doing with this budget that should have been passed to go into effect the end of September.

If you really want to talk about the hypocrisy of this body, and there is plenty of it, the fact that we have folks coming to the floor who haven't said a peep about CHIP—it also, by the way, ran out of money the end of September—and talk about how important it is for those kids. By the way, it is very important for those kids. It is the first time we have heard a peep out of them. That is interesting.

The fact is, we do need to come together, and we do need a long-term budget deal. By the way, when I am talking about long term, I am not talking about years and years, I am talking about until the end of September of this year. That is all we have to have is a budget deal to the end of September of this year that addresses more than just CHIP, and CHIP is important. It needs to address our military. It needs to address our southern border security. The chairman knows this. We work together on the Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security. He understands how important this is.

We have to make sure our borders are secure. We have to make sure we have domestic programs that working families and businesses depend upon in this country, such as CHIP, funding for community health centers, making sure there are dollars there for rural ambulance services.

The list goes on and on.

We have had an incredible failure of leadership here. I think we have had three patches to this budget—three of them. This was supposed to be done 111 days ago. Over 111 days ago, we were supposed to have a budget that lasted for the fiscal year 2018. We were supposed to have a bill that kept services for the U.S. Government open and operating so Montanans and Americans could have the certainty they elected us to create, but for 111 days, the lead-

ership on the other side of the aisle—and I mean intentionally so, I believe—have played politics and kicked the can down the road.

This is not nuclear physics, folks. This is about funding our government. It is not that tough, but we have hit deadline after deadline after deadline, and what we have been told is, look, we will extend about another month or two, and then we will get an agreement. Oh, we will extend out another month, and we will get an agreement.

At Christmastime I was ready to work here through Christmas to get this done because families in this country deserve the certainty of the basic job of setting up a budget. This is the basic job we are elected for in this body. I believe on December 19, once again, we kicked the can down the road, and it was said: You know what, we are going to have a deal by January 19. Well, guess what. It is January 19, and now we are going to move the goal post again.

Each of those previous patches I voted for. Why? Because I believed them. I expected the leaders of this body to work in good faith and get the job done. I was wrong because, for 111 days, they have refused to provide long-term funding for community health centers. For 111 days, they have failed to pass a bill that secures our borders. For 111 days, they have neglected our children by refusing to reauthorize CHIP. For 111 days, they have failed to do the most basic and fundamental aspect of our job; that is, pass a long-term budget that works for this country and works for my home State of Montana.

Now, today we are about 9 hours before the government is set to run out of money. Folks on the other side of the aisle are pointing their finger over here and saying: We have to reauthorize CHIP. If we don't, all these kids—guess what. That same argument could have been made 6 months ago and was not. We have 24,000 kids in Montana who, I am telling you, have been watching. Those families have been watching. They ask: Why? Why hasn't it already been done?

Why are we 111 days after the budget has been passed, and we still have nothing? There is a CHIP bill that has been sitting on the majority leader's desk for many a month to reauthorize CHIP. I believe it has 24 cosponsors on it. There are Members of this body who are not even cosponsors of that bill who have found religion and have come to the floor to passionately talk about CHIP, and we haven't heard crickets from them until the last day or two.

So the folks who have been down here on the floor and on cable television talking about what a great program CHIP is—and it has been a great program. It is one of the first major pieces of legislation I voted on when I was in the Montana Senate. Where have you been? Why haven't we had it on the floor and voted on it? It is important. It is pure hypocrisy. It is what

the Senator from Alaska talked about, only on a different level.

This dysfunction here is way, way, way too deep. This bill also fails to fund community health centers. I will state, I talked to the administrators of the community health centers in places like RiverStone and Flathead, up in Kalispell and Bullock and Havre. I tell you what, these folks are sweating bullets. They are afraid they are going to have to close their facilities down. They provide primary healthcare to 100,000 folks. That may not sound like a lot of people, but in Montana, a State of just over 1 million folks, it is a big deal. These are essential facilities to our communities across Montana. They provide basic healthcare, and they keep families alive. The folks who run these community health centers have told me face-to-face: If we don't get the funding, we are going to have to close the doors.

It has been 111 days, and we should have had a budget to fund community health centers, and we are still standing here today saying: Guess what. When we come back here in February, things are going to be just fine, just like they said in December. I have news for you, nothing is going to change between now and February so let's get a long-term budget deal today that addresses some of these issues.

This bill also fails to make our borders secure. As I said earlier, the Presiding Officer and I have worked on the Appropriations Homeland Security Subcommittee to draft a bill that works. It invests in a wall where a wall makes sense. It hires more Border Patrol agents. That bill was never brought up to full committee. I am sorry that never happened because it would have been great, and it is not included in the bill before us today.

Time and again, over the last 4 months, good bipartisan bills have been piled up on the leadership's desk. Rather than bring these bipartisan bills to the floor, rather than pass a long-term budget, a more fiscally responsible budget, the Senate has just said: No. Guess what. We will do it next month—and we will do it the month after that and we will do it the month after that.

It is time to stop putting the bandaid on our budget because in 4 weeks we will be back here again if this passes, and it will be the same problems. In fact, we can solve them today, and we need to solve them today. Enough is enough.

Congress has three times passed short-term, stopgap, crisis-funding bills. These bills fail my constituents, and they waste taxpayer dollars. Enough is enough. People are tired of this, and I know they are tired on the other side of the aisle because they have told me. They told me it is time to do our job here. They are as frustrated as I am. They are as frustrated as Montanans are when I meet them face-to-face in townhalls and coffee shops. They tell me it is time for Congress to get off their duff and do their jobs.

Montanans don't run their businesses like this, and our government should not run like this, especially after I hear promises to drain the swamp. This is exactly the opposite. Bringing this garbage bill to the floor is a dereliction of duty. It is incompetent, and mostly it is a failure of leadership. It is a failure of vision.

In any other business in this country, if managers acted like the leadership of this body, they would lose their jobs. It is almost as if the majority had planned this all along to get us to this point for political purposes. Well, guess what, we should not be here for political purposes; we should be here as Americans doing our best to give people the certainty they need rather than playing with a hot potato, saying: You know what, we will do it next month.

We were sent here to govern. We ought to govern and put politics in the closet. We have 9 hours to do a job, and we need to do it. If the majority leadership and the White House are going to continue to sit back and twiddle their thumbs, let's bypass them and let's get a deal. There are good people in this body. We need to sit down and get a deal that works for the rest of this year—that is, until the end of September, not until the 19th of February—that strengthens our borders, reauthorizes CHIP, funds our community health centers, supports rural hospitals, and fixes DACA.

I know there are scores and scores of folks on the other side of the aisle who want to do this. Nobody should leave their desk in this body until this job is done. We are nearly 4 months into this fiscal year. At some point in time, the Appropriations Committee should be starting to work on the 2019 fiscal year budget, but we are not because we can't even get through 2018. We need to stop governing from crisis to crisis. Nobody wants a shutdown, and that is why we need to stay here and do our jobs.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MURKOWSKI). The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, I realized a long time ago something unique and unfortunate about the way Congress can work. It seems sometimes that in Washington, and only in Washington, the more people agree on something, the less likely it is to get done. In the real world, back in Colorado and in Alaska, where the Presiding Officer is from, the more people agree on something, the more likely it is to get done and the more likely you will see progress on an important issue to the people of Colorado and to the people of Alaska. But here in Washington, the more you agree, the more people seem to want to push back to fight and to divide.

So here we are approaching the zero hour of a government shutdown, and I hear from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—where is the good faith, they say. It has been 111 days, and these programs haven't been per-

manently reauthorized? Where is the good faith, they say. They say that we just make it worse by passing a 4-week continuing resolution. Where is the good faith?

Let me just talk a little bit about where we are right now. I have been a part of a bipartisan working group—very proud of the work we are doing—trying to find a solution on a very important issue dealing with many thousands of children around our country and around our State. In Colorado, this issue of DACA, of Dreamers, is incredibly important, not just to part of the State, not just to Denver or the Front Range. Two kids of mine go to school with people who were brought here at a very young age through no fault of their own, and we all agree there needs to be a solution for those kids.

We agree we should address the opiate crisis that is gripping this Nation, that is tearing families apart, and that is resulting in the deaths of far too many people. When you have a crisis that is resulting in the age and life expectancy of Americans declining, like the opiate crisis has, we should address that.

We have men and women in uniform around the country defending this Nation. There are hundreds of thousands in Korea facing down a threat from North Korea. An article in the Wall Street Journal today talked about the special operators who are now in the Philippines directly intervening in the War on Terror in the Philippines, fighting radical Islamic terrorists. Of course we all know about the work that is taking place in the Middle East, the conflict in Syria, the conflict in Iraq, the conflict in Afghanistan, and the progress we have made fighting back on ISIS, fighting back on terrorists, the fact that we have shrunk the ground they have taken. It is one of the great victories people haven't really talked about yet because they would rather talk about divisive issues. And to think that we are hours away from a government shutdown, and somehow people think it is going to make it better. They are going to shut down the government, and somehow that makes it better for the military.

They are willing to shut down the government because they object to a 4-week CR so they can get a 5-day CR or a 3-day continuing resolution. Only in Washington can a bad solution be fixed by a worse solution, but that is exactly what people want to do.

It seems to me that this place ought to get to work, and it doesn't get to work by shutting things down, by going to your partisan corners, picking up your sticks, and going home. Yet that is what some in this body would like to do.

We have a continuing resolution that represents policies that people support. There is not a thing in there that people disagree with that they would vote against—at least that is what we have been told.

In fact, let's look at the CHIP reauthorization. I heard my colleague from

Montana say that this is a garbage bill. A garbage bill that reauthorizes CHIP for 6 years? A garbage bill that will provide healthcare for 8.9 million women and children on SCHIP coverage? This is a garbage bill that provides the longest extension of women and children's healthcare since it was created?

I hear from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle: Well, they didn't talk about it. They didn't care.

I have been a cosponsor of that bill for months because I believe it is important. It is important to the people of my State.

The fact is, people across this country are tired of the finger-pointing, they are tired of the blame game, and they are tired of the shutdown politics that we are just hours away from seeing played out because people would take this country, this government hostage to the politics of their choice.

I am old enough to remember back in 2013 when President Obama thought a government shutdown was a bad idea, when the Democratic leader believed that a government shutdown could result in governmental chaos, when you shut the government down over the politics of your choice. Yet here we are hours away from people wishing to do just that.

We can find solutions to our Nation's biggest challenges. I am part of a bipartisan working group to work on these solutions, but it makes it more difficult, not less difficult, to find solutions when people shut down the government, and not only that—collateral damage occurs as a result.

There is collateral damage on the men and women across this country who are hurt because of what this government cannot do to help them. We are in one of the most severe flu seasons this country has seen. The CDC has a lot of work to do. If you shut down the government, the CDC can no longer get information from the States about where that flu epidemic is heading, and that makes a difference on where they send vaccines. If you don't vote for this bill to keep the government open, 8.9 million women and children could be affected because of the risk it puts to SCHIP.

Let me talk about a story from my hometown. There are five military bases in the city of Colorado Springs. Here is the headline from a local newspaper: "Potential shutdown would hit hardest at Colorado Springs military bases." There are men and women at Fort Carson, CO, and across Colorado Springs, overseas, deployed on our War on Terror, protecting us at home so we can come to work each and every day so we can have debates on the Senate floor. Some 6,000 civilians are going to be furloughed if this government shutdown occurs. These are civilians who support the War on Terror, who support our men and women in uniform around the globe. Yet, somehow, shutting down the government and furloughing 6,000 civilians is deemed to be

better than a 4-week CR? Only in Washington can people claim that a bad bill should be replaced by a worse bill. Only in Washington can people decide that bad policy shouldn't be preferred over something that is worse, and that is exactly what the argument seems to be. They don't like it, so make it worse. That is not fair to the American people. It is not fair that collateral damage hurts men, women, and children across this country when we can do the right thing and we can bring a solution to our immigration crisis, we can bring a solution to the challenge our military faces, and we can bring a solution to the opiate crisis.

Let me tell you about a business in Fort Collins called Indivior. They have made a breakthrough in the way that treatment is delivered for people who are addicted to opiates. It is a liquid medication, and when it is injected, it solidifies. It is time-released over a month, so it doesn't rely on day-to-day injections. It doesn't rely on a person faithfully taking their medication because if they have a relapse, it can disrupt their medication and what they are doing in their treatment. This takes away that concern and gives them that treatment for a month. That was approved through an FDA emergency expedited review process, but there is legislation that this body needs to pass in order to make sure it is available in a way that will help the American people. Shut down the government, and we can't get that done.

Committees can't meet and the work can't proceed. But I guess that is the solution that people want. I guess shutting down the government seems to be the cure-all for them. Take a hostage, push it off, and somehow that makes it better.

The American people just want us to find an answer. They want us to have good-faith solutions to our problems, and men and women of good faith in this body and the House of Representatives are trying each and every day to do that. But don't prove to the American people their worse suspicions that Washington doesn't care. Pass the continuing resolution. Continue negotiations. We have time to talk. We have time to communicate. We have time to work. Stop the temper tantrums. The American people deserve better.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, as I come to the floor today, we are facing the prospect of a government shutdown. At midnight tonight, funding runs out, the lights will go dark, and when that happens, everyone suffers. No one wins; everyone suffers. I know that, and you know that. Republicans know that, and we have offered a solution that keeps the government open and extends the Children's Health Insurance Program. As a doctor, I will tell you how valuable that program is for children all across the country.

The House has already passed this legislation. Democrats in the Senate

have promised to block it, to stand in the way. Some have actually been bragging that they can shut down the government and that they want to shut down the government. Why would someone want to do that? Well, here is what the New York Times said on its front page this morning: "Senate Shutdown Looms As Spending Bill Advances. House approves a stopgap measure while Democrats dig in on immigration." That is the reason the Democrats want to shut down the government of this entire country—over the issue of immigration. That is the New York Times. Here is the Washington Post this morning: "Shutdown looms despite House action. Democrats tie 'dreamers' to passage of budget deal."

There it is—the New York Times and the Washington Post. The minority leader is forcing a shutdown over the issue of illegal immigration. Democrats are ready to set aside all other issues, all other deadlines, all other priorities.

Republicans have written and passed legislation that funds the government. That means funding for our military, funding for our veterans. It means funding for opioid treatment. It means funding for everything that our Federal Government does now, and it funds the Children's Health Insurance Program—not just for a week or a month, it funds it for the next 6 years. This is a program that helped provide medical care for almost 9 million children and needy families across this country. There are more than 7,300 people in my home State of Wyoming who benefit from this program. The money for this program is going to start running out in some places very soon. The funding has been in limbo since last fall. Some States are getting ready to send letters to families—letters that tell those families their coverage is going to be discontinued because this Senate didn't act.

States have been asking for certainty, and that is what we are doing with this legislation. We are providing that certainty. We are taking care of this program, which is so vital to families across every State in this country, for the next 6 years. Democrats are blocking it. It does seem to be that what they really want to do is make a political point at the expense of everything else and everyone else. They are willing to hold 9 million children and their families hostage to do it. They are willing to hold hostage more than 300 million Americans who could be harmed by a prolonged government shutdown. And it is all over the immigration issue, as they talk about in the Washington Post and the New York Times, an issue known as DACA, which stands for "deferred action for childhood arrivals." It was intended as a temporary program to deal with the problem of people who were brought to this country illegally when they were just young children. The program was set up by an Executive action by President Obama. It wasn't done by law. It

wasn't a bipartisan program. It was a Democratic President acting on his own to kick the can down the road on this issue.

These issues related to immigration—and specifically illegal immigration—are very tough, and we need to keep working toward a solution. There are discussions going on every day within the Senate—Republican and Democrat—between the House and the Senate. Why do people want to risk blowing up these discussions?

Well, it seems that whatever we agree to needs to include important matters of border security because, to me, border security is national security, and that has to be included in that discussion and deliberation. Any solution is going to have to include real fixes to our broken immigration system so that we are not just having the same argument again in a couple of years.

I think coming up with a solution like this does continue to take time. Certainly, it is not something we can do by midnight tonight. There is not even a good reason we need to rush to solve this problem in a few hours. The fact is, no current DACA recipients are going to lose their benefits under the program for 6 months.

Democrats are setting an arbitrary deadline of midnight tonight, and they are threatening to shut down the government if their deadline is not met. The legislation Republicans have offered takes care of one emergency, and it gives negotiators time to reach consensus on this separate and unrelated subject.

The continuing resolution already passed by the House provides certainty to the Children's Health Insurance Program, and it allows us the chance to work out some certainty on the DACA issue.

Some Democrats are saying that they refuse to do that. Well, it is interesting because in 2013, the minority leader, Senator SCHUMER, thought that a government shutdown at that time was a terrible idea. He said:

No matter how strongly one feels about an issue, you shouldn't hold millions of people hostage. . . . That's wrong, and we can't give in to that.

He even spelled out the exact situation we are facing today. He did it not just on the Senate floor; he did it on television in 2013. On ABC's "This Week," October 6, 2013, he said:

We believe strongly in immigration reform. We could say, "we're shutting down the government, we're not gonna raise the debt ceiling, until you pass immigration reform." It would be governmental chaos.

He is right. It would be governmental chaos. That is what Senator SCHUMER said in 2013. Now he is trying to create exactly that same governmental chaos that he described back then. It is for the exact same reason that he talked about in 2013—the exact same reason that the Washington Post cites as the reason on today's front page: "Democrats tie 'dreamers' to passage of bud-

et deal." In the New York Times: "Democrats dig in on immigration."

What is different now is that Democrats have decided to stake all of their political hopes on this one issue. They are holding America hostage to do it.

Nobody benefits from the Democrats shutting down the government. Nobody benefits from the game the Democrats are playing with the security and the safety of American families. To me, it is irresponsible for them to seek this shutdown over their agenda on this issue of immigration.

We should pass the resolution that we have before us today. It is time for Democrats to step back from the damage this shutdown will cause to children, to our military, to our veterans, to our economy, and return to the table to discuss the issues in which they are focused.

I would recommend to my colleagues across the aisle that they follow the advice from Senator SCHUMER in 2013: Don't play politics with people's lives and create "governmental chaos."

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, I rise to talk about why we are here, but I will just begin with a definitive statement: There is not one of the 49 Democrats in this Chamber who wants the government to shut down. And I will conclude with this, but I will just state that if the government of the United States shuts down, it is for one reason and one reason only, and that is that the majority leadership does not want to work weekends. I will come back to that in a minute.

Why are we here? We are here debating on a House continuing resolution drafted without Democratic support or consultation at the eleventh hour and sent over to us on the last day of a spending authorization period.

Most folks in the Chamber know—but those watching on television may not—we were supposed to have a budget and an appropriations bill by October 1. That did not happen. So the leadership suggested that we agree to work and find an appropriations bill and a budget by December 8. That didn't happen. Then there was the suggestion that we delay until December 22, and that didn't happen. Then there was a vote on December 22 to delay until January 19—today. Apparently, that is not going to happen.

The request today is that we pass a continuing resolution that would put this matter to the 16th of February, and we would then be in the fifth month of the fiscal year without a budget deal. Why would we want to do that? What we should want to do is not budget by continuing resolution, but actually do a budget deal.

For folks who aren't schooled in the insider phrases we use, a continuing resolution is like driving your car looking in the rearview mirror. We ought to be driving our car looking

through the windshield—look forward with a budget that looks forward—but a continuing resolution is: Well, we are unwilling or unable to make a decision, so let's just do what we did yesterday. That is no way to operate the government of the greatest country on Earth.

What we need to be about is finding a final budget deal. What is wrong with continuing resolutions? I think a pivotal moment in this discussion—as we are sort of looking at how it has developed—occurred about 8 days ago. I am on the Armed Services Committee. I am the father of a U.S. Marine. The Secretary of Defense, General Mattis, came to talk to both the Democratic caucus and the Republican caucus lunches.

I don't know what he said to the Republican lunch, but I know what he said to us. The Secretary looked us in the eye—this was, I think, on January 8—and said: Do not give me another continuing resolution. The pattern of continuing resolutions has hurt the Nation's defense. Do not give me another continuing resolution.

When the Secretary of Defense looks at us and tells us that, I take that seriously.

Yesterday, we had an Armed Services hearing, and four Trump administration nominees for key positions dealing with research, acquisitions, installations, and energy were before us. Because they each have experience working with the DOD or other Federal agencies, I asked each of them: What do you think of continuing resolutions?

To a person, these men and women said: They are horrible. We shouldn't live under continuing resolutions. Don't do them. Do a budget.

When they were done testifying, I said: The interesting thing is that you are actually here on the day when the House is going to be voting on a continuing resolution that is directly contrary to what Secretary Mattis asked of us and what you are testifying to today.

Last night, as we were on the floor awaiting the House message to come over with the continuing resolution, the Pentagon's chief spokesperson tweeted: Continuing resolutions are wasteful, and they hurt the military. Don't do another continuing resolution. We need a full budget for 2018.

This morning, Secretary Mattis spoke, giving a national security speech, and he was asked about this budgetary debate. He said: "The value of the American military is grossly enhanced by the sense that the American model of government, of the people, by the people, for the people, can function and carry out its governmental responsibilities." He continues to say that the right thing for our troops is to do a full budget, not a continuing resolution.

So to hear my colleagues stand up and say that the Democrats want to shut government down: No, we don't. We want to do what the Secretary of Defense said we should do.

We want to do what a veteran told me yesterday in Arlington. I had a veterans' roundtable. I was listening to their concerns about VA and mental health—issues we care about. One veteran said: I am a veteran, but I want to talk to you about being a Federal employee. I am a Federal employee in civilian service. I live in Quantico. Don't make us live under continuing continuations. The uncertainty of it is just too great. Find a final budget deal.

That is the task that is really before us right now, on January 19. Can we find a final budget deal? What should we do? It is not that hard. The deadline tonight is completely artificial. There is nothing magic about January 19.

What we should do is commit, as Senators and House Members, to stay here and get a final budget deal done. There are a series of discrete items. There are the budgetary numbers for defense and other important priorities—healthcare, education, transportation, mental health. There are emergency relief packages for the hurricanes and wildfires of the last few months. Those are important.

There are a number of healthcare priorities like the CHIP program. That is important.

I would argue that a resolution of the issue with Dreamers is important. Why do I say it is important? Because President Trump told us to do it in September. He said: I am going to end the Dreamer program in 6 months. I will end DACA in 6 months. I disagreed with that, but what I did agree with was when he said that this was for Congress to fix. He put a burden on our shoulders to fix it in September.

It is 5 months later, and there is a bipartisan proposal on the table. President Trump said: Send me a proposal, and I am going to sign it. You work it out, and I am going to sign it.

We now have a proposal that I believe is ready to be voted on and, I believe, would pass in both bodies.

What we should do is avoid the short term—avoid the continuing resolutions that the Secretary of Defense has told us not to pass, follow his advice and stay here at the table over the weekend and into next week, and find a final budget deal. That is how we can best serve our constituents.

I think there is only one person who has talked about shutdown with glee and with interest that it happen—the President. This is a tweet from May: "Our country needs a good 'shutdown.'"

I remember the tweet well because I am on the Budget Committee, and we were having budget hearings then. We had a Trump administration nominee before us for a key position—OMB, I believe. I asked him: Do you think there is such a thing as a good shutdown of the U.S. Government? I have been asking that question to many witnesses before the committee. Most say: No, there is in never such a thing as a good shutdown of the U.S. Government. That is what we believe, and I

think that is what our Republican colleagues believe. There is no such thing as a good shutdown of the U.S. Government. We all believe that.

In this instance, we don't even need to entertain the thought. If we are willing to stay over the course of the next few days to try to do what Secretary Mattis asked and find a final budget deal, I believe we can find one, especially if the President were to say: Congress, stay at your job. Find a final budget deal. It has to be bipartisan, and I will support it. If the President were to say those things, we could find a deal. That would be the best thing for all concerned.

Instead of kicking it down the road for a month, we might have to say that we are going to kick it down for 3 days or 4 days or 5 days while we negotiate. Let's put the pressure on to negotiate and not do this month-long extension that we have done since October 1, which has gotten us nowhere.

That is what I meant when I said that the only reason this government would shut down over this is if the leadership decides they don't want to work on weekends. Federal employees work on weekends. Go out to Dulles and look at TSA employees doing their jobs as people are traveling around. A whole lot of folks who are my constituents in Virginia, our neighbors in Richmond, work on weekends. I know my Senate colleagues work hard in their districts. We work on weekends.

We can work on weekends here. We can scrap some plans for the weekend. We can commit to finding a final budget deal that would meet what Secretary Mattis asked us to do. We should do that.

No one wants to shut this government down. There is only one person who has been talking about it with glee. But even today, when President Trump asked Senator SCHUMER to come and have a dialogue, I think that was a tacit admission that he now realizes it would be a bad idea. If it is a bad idea, let's just stay here and get a budget deal done. That is what the folks sent us here to do, and I know we can do it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY

Mr. DONNELLY. Madam President, I rise today to discuss two important issues: keeping our government running and protecting an important tool in the fight against the opioid epidemic. I know how strong the Presiding Officer is on that as well.

Today we face a deadline to fund the government. It is the most basic duty of Congress to keep our government running.

I was elected by the people of Indiana to work every day on behalf of Hoosiers to do my job as a U.S. Senator. Keeping the government running is our job, and I will vote to keep the government open.

I hope that Republicans and Democrats will join together to reach an

agreement that avoids a shutdown. We still have that opportunity to prevent a shutdown. I stand ready to work with anyone.

I share the frustration of many Hoosiers and Americans. We have been down this road before, but Congress does not need to follow that path again.

As a potential shutdown looms, the President's opioid public health emergency declaration is on the verge of expiring. According to reports today, the administration is planning to cut the Office of National Drug Control Policy by 95 percent. Let me say that again. The President's opioid public health emergency declaration is on the verge of expiring, and according to reports today, the administration is planning to cut the Office of National Drug Control Policy by 95 percent.

ONDCP coordinates Federal efforts to combat opioid abuse and heroin use, as well as drug trafficking in Indiana and across the country. In addition, ONDCP administers the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Program, or HIDTA, which supports and enhances cooperation between Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies to combat drug trafficking. It is a program that effectively brings together critical law enforcement partners in Indiana, and the reported cuts to ONDCP could upend the good progress that is being made.

As we work to confront the opioid crisis, we should be investing in critical tools for Hoosier law enforcement and communities to combat drug abuse and trafficking. This is a crisis. It is not a time for the Federal Government to take critical tools for Hoosiers communities off the table. We should be doubling down on effective efforts. We must confront the opioid epidemic with all possible tools available and everyone working together to address this public health emergency.

I yield back.

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to enter into a colloquy with the Senator from Oklahoma.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, we are here to talk a little bit about immigration reform and maybe a little bit about the looming government shutdown. I want to start with the government shutdown because it is intrinsically linked with some of the arguments that are being made by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

What we are trying to do is fairly simple. We are trying to fund our servicemembers. We are trying to fund our veterans. We want to get a long-term authorization for the CHIP program. The CHIP program actually expired last year, but there were sufficient funds on account to continue funding, but they are running out. In States like North Carolina and other States, this program is going to start being

shut down if we don't get much needed resources. We are talking about a multiyear reauthorization for the plan and, of course, continuing to fund the National Institutes of Health, which is a critically important part of combating diseases, finding treatments, and cures. That is all we are trying to do with this spending bill.

The other thing we are trying to do is create a bridge for a month so we can get our colleagues on both sides of the aisle talking and hopefully get some certainty in terms of funding going into next year—if it were up to me and I think up to Senator LANKFORD, for several years, but it would be good to get some long-term certainty in the funding process because right now these continuing resolutions are killing us. We are living paycheck to paycheck. It creates all kinds of inefficient processes. It is wasting taxpayer dollars.

We have to at least start with funding the government tonight. At midnight tonight, if we don't act on a continuing resolution, then we will be shutting down the government. I, for one, am going to vote for the continuing resolution like I have every resolution for the last 3 years I have been here because I believe we need to pay our bills. I believe we need to fund our servicemembers. I believe the civilian employees should know they can come back to work on Monday, and we need to do a better job of actually getting together and coming up with centered solutions that gain enough support on both sides of the aisle to do that.

Now I want to talk about why we are at the shutdown. We are mainly at the shutdown because some Members want to put all of our government funding at risk—all the funding I was talking about here at risk—because we have not yet reached an agreement on immigration reform.

Senator LANKFORD and I have spent a lot of time on this. In September of last year, we introduced the SUCCEED Act, which was an honest effort to get into the discussion on how we could come up with a long-term solution for the DACA population. We got together with Senator DURBIN, Senator GRAHAM, and a number of other Members to try and negotiate out our differences. We made some progress.

Now I will bring you forward to a couple of weeks ago. We met with the President 2 weeks ago, on a Thursday. Republican Members—it included myself, Senator LANKFORD, and other Members, and we told the President we thought we were making progress. Senator GRAHAM was in the meeting as well. But we thought to really get the deal done, we needed a bicameral, bipartisan meeting. The President thought it was a good idea, and he hosted the first meeting that following Tuesday. That meeting—actually, the majority of it, about 55 minutes of it—was televised. People could see the discussion going on. Actually, people saw

a lot of good interchange. There were clearly gaps, but we thought we were making progress. What we agreed in that meeting was that there were four main pillars of this first phase of immigration reform.

The idea of comprehensive immigration reform sounds good, except it has failed every time they attempted it. We decided we should start with a more focused effort to address some of the border security concerns and certainty for the DACA population. It sounded like a good idea, so we decided we would have the No. 2 leaders in the House and the Senate—the Democrats and Republicans, four people—get together the following day and develop a schedule so a subset of that group of a couple of dozen people who met with the President could get together and work out our differences.

Senator LANKFORD and I knew going into it that in order to compromise, we were going to have to accept positions that were short of what we wanted, but that is the whole purpose of compromising. Nobody gets everything they want. We were looking forward to what we would hope would be a schedule coming out from the whips—the Democrats and the Republicans, the four who were in the meeting—and that never happened. What we instead found out was on Thursday, a subset of the group, without talking with any of us, decided to have a meeting with the President and see if they could offer their solution. That is what a lot of them have been talking about on the floor. They are saying: Our solution is ready to go. We can put it in the year-end spending bill. We have bipartisan support. We can let it go.

Last night, I finally got the full text of their solution. I want to share it with you. There it is. It is a title. It is nothing. There are no specific provisions. There is not a bill filed. There is no evidence they have spoken with people to try to bridge the gaps. It is completely counter to what we agreed to do that Tuesday, a week or so ago.

I am asking my colleagues to recognize that people like I and Senator LANKFORD care about the DACA population. We want to provide them with certainty. We also want to make sure we put balance into the proposal so we are not here again 10 years from now, so we can make sure we have something of enduring value. We don't want to do something quick, where maybe you play gotcha and you put some pressure on someone and you get a bill because those sorts of bills are always at risk of being reversed.

We have already taken hits in our States. There are people who think we never should have had this discussion, but we care about the DACA population. We care about border security. We care about Homeland Security and a number of the things that have to go together so we provide a solution, but then we also make sure it is highly unlikely that Senators 10, 12, 15 years from now are in the same place.

Before I turn it over to Senator LANKFORD, I want to talk a little bit about why border security should be argued on compassionate grounds. I was in Texas in February. I spent a week there with Senator CORNYN and some of the other Members. I was all along the border. I met with Border Patrol agents. Some of them had been shot at. They had stories about some of their colleagues who had been killed. I was in Laredo where they showed me the door of a helicopter that had just been shot through a couple of weeks earlier by someone across the Rio Grande in what they call Nuevo Laredo. It is a dangerous place down there.

There is a compassionate basis for trying to keep our border security and CIS agents safe. There is also a compassionate case for knowing who is crossing the border and where they are. Why? Because 10,000 people have died crossing that border over the last 20 years. Almost 1,000 of them were kids or minors. That doesn't include the number who get killed or die long before they ever get to the southern border.

The way it works is they have these human traffickers, or human smugglers, who charge thousands of dollars to get somebody across the border. Sometimes they get across; oftentimes they don't. It is a moneymaker. As a matter of fact, the cartels that run the different plazas—that is the geographies along the southern border. It is sort of like if you go through this plaza, you better be paying a toll or you are probably going to die. We have one example where 72 people were all murdered, one family—men, women, and children—because the person who was smuggling them apparently got crosswise with the cartel. So to send a message, they killed these people. They died because we didn't know they were there. We didn't know they crossed the border. We didn't have the situational awareness that we are trying to get done with the border security provisions that are in a compromise bill that we offered.

I can also talk about the millions of doses of drugs that cross our border every week. Every week millions of doses of poison cross our border. We talk about the opioid epidemic, and we know a vast majority of the opioids—the heroin, the fentanyl, the variants of opioids that are coming across the border—are coming from south of the border, either by water or by land. If that is not a compelling case, a compassionate case, for American border security with what we are trying to do with immigration reform, I don't know what is. We are not talking about a wall. We are not talking about a 2,300-mile wall.

I have been criticized for several years because I sit on the Judiciary Committee. We have had a number of hearings that would have never made sense. The President has been briefed by Border Patrol. He understands it is

a series of structures, people, technology. Infrastructure is what border security call it. We are asking for the baseline funding and build it out over time—walls where it makes sense, fences and roads, reconnaissance, and just intelligence-gathering devices in some places. That is all we are asking for. There is a deal to be struck here very quickly, but you don't do it by going around a process that, 2 days before, you agreed to participate in.

I thank Senator LANKFORD because Senator LANKFORD has done an extraordinary job. I also want to thank our staffs because they have done an amazing amount of work to really come up with something that had been well received, to a certain extent, by Senator DURBIN and others. In fact, they embraced some of the provisions, but then things just broke down because all they wanted to talk about was the DACA component. They didn't want to talk about the other things that make it an enduring and impactful and compassionate solution for which, I think, we could easily get 60 votes.

I would appreciate Senator LANKFORD's thoughts and comments on this.

I yield the floor to Senator LANKFORD.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, Senator TILLIS and I have come to the floor today because we have just some incredible frustration and wanted to be able to bring some facts to this conversation.

I absolutely grieve for the Federal workers in my State. I mean, there are some phenomenal people who do an amazing job. Most people will never know their names, but, every day, they are getting up to serve the American people.

Every day, there are folks who are in our military who are serving the American people. The civilians who surround them, though they are not listed as Federal employees, are intimately connected to what we are doing for the Federal task—for people. They are trying to figure out this afternoon what is going to happen to them this weekend and next week. They are frantically getting together in offices all over Oklahoma and, quite frankly, all over America and are trying to piece together the “now whats?” of a government shutdown, which is distracting them from getting all of the things done that they already need to get done that they are backlogged on now. For what?

The frustration of this whole focus on “let's do a government shutdown over not having to have real discussions about DACA and immigration” is not only not accurate, but it is also something that is already in the process that is somehow being short-circuited. All of these Federal workers and all of these civilian employees who are going through all of this turmoil in

trying to figure out why DACA is not resolved and why the deadline for DACA is in the first week of March, yet it forces them to be out and have all of this chaos now, at the end of January, has brought utter confusion to everyone, especially when you know the history of this dialogue. Let me walk everyone backward through a span of a few months here.

In September, the Nation was surprised when President Trump announced that he was not going to renew DACA and that he wanted a legislative, long-term fix for DACA. The very day that he made that announcement, I released a statement, saying: In America, we do not hold children accountable for the acts of their parents. We don't do that in American law.

Just a couple of days after that, the President called me late one night. He said: Hey, I saw your statement in a report about that. Can we talk about it? We spent about 20 minutes late that evening just talking about immigration policy and his interest in getting a legislative, long-term resolution for DACA, for these kids who have to renew every 2 or 3 years, and they have no idea what is going to happen. He wanted to have some semblance of permanence for them but, at the same time, also resolve some of the issues around border security that were not controversial a few years ago. He said that we need to deal with some issues with border security, and we need to deal with the issue of DACA and give them some semblance of permanence. Can we put this together?

Actually, at that time, Senator TILLIS and I were already working to get something together because, for the last 15 years, the DREAM Act has come up before the House and the Senate, and for 15 years, it has failed every single time. The DREAM Act failed when there was a Democratic President, a Democratic Senate, and a Democratic House of Representatives. That bill was not going to pass. We knew that, so we went to work, asking: What is a better solution that will provide some semblance of permanence on this?

Our conversation was about a lot of the pushback as to why the DREAM Act had not passed in the past. A lot of Americans feel like: I understand this group of individuals has grown up in our country, pledges allegiance to our flag, speaks English, is passionate about where they live, that this feels like home to them, but it is not home. They wanted them to be able to have that opportunity, but they didn't want them to be able to cut in line.

So we put in a process to say that here is a way those individuals can earn the right to be naturalized citizens of the United States, but they have to earn it through a process, just as someone who is international would have to go through that process to be here. The exception would be they are already here, and they wouldn't have what DACA provided. DACA provided 2

years of “we will not arrest you” but no legal status. This would provide immediate legal status and an opportunity after 10 years to be able to earn naturalization. That had never been offered like that before.

We worked through all of the details of that and laid out a proposal and said: This is a section of a larger bill. We feel that this is a way to get past what has blocked the DREAM Act year after year after year and what has been the biggest frustration for many of the people in the country with the DREAM Act. Yet our caveat was very consistent. We wanted to be able to resolve this, but it had to be resolved with border security attached to it.

I didn't think that was an unreasonable request. I was surprised to hear that it might have been since, in the previous Gang of 8 versions several years ago that had come out of the Senate, there had been a large section in it about border security. I assumed this would be a nonissue to be able to pair those issues together. It seems irresponsible to deal with the DACA issue and to not address: How did that happen in the first place? To say that we have a secure border and that we don't need to address anything would be to ignore 12 million examples in our country of that rule being violated either through visa overstay or through individuals coming across the border who want to be in our country but who have crossed illegally instead of through a legal process.

We are a very open, receiving country. Every day, a half a million people cross our southern border legally—a half a million every day. A million people a year legally become citizens of the United States. We are not a country that is anti-immigration. We just want it done the right way. We think the law should apply to everyone equally all the time and don't like anyone circumventing the law.

So here is a history lesson.

On September 5, the President makes that announcement. Within days, we have conversations with the President about it. He agrees we need to be able to have something that is a long-term solution for border security and for DACA. Within about 2 weeks, Senator TILLIS and I release the SUCCEED Act and say this has to be part of our border security. Thankfully, in our conference, at the same time, Senator CORNYN is also working through border security to be able to partner it with this. At the same time, Senator COTTON and Senator PERDUE are also working on other areas dealing with chain migration, knowing these could all be partnered together to be able to put into a final bill. They were individual titles of a larger proposal. We were bringing those out.

In October, the President of the United States released a long report, saying here is what he would like to have in a bill. He put great detail into it and said that this is what he expects the bill to be like when it is resolved.

So now it is October. He said that we have to get this resolved. We release three different bills, and the President releases something. We want to start negotiations.

In November, we are in negotiations in a bipartisan group, and every day in the bipartisan group, all that our Democratic colleagues want to talk about is DACA—every day. Our staffs meet every day. We are meeting every other day as Members, going through this—sometimes every day going through it. Every day, it is DACA, and, every day, we bring up: Hey, there are other aspects of this that we have agreed to. Yet, every day, they say: Well, let's work on DACA some more.

It finally hits a point in December that I ask: When are we going to get to talking about border security? We have to talk about that. Well, guess what happened. The next meeting I was not invited to attend. Neither was I invited to the next one. Neither was Senator TILLIS. Our staffs find out they are still meeting and contact them and say: Hey, we are still interested in getting to a bipartisan agreement. They do not respond to our staffs' emails. They will not even tell us when or where they are meeting.

We didn't walk away from the negotiations. We were kicked out of the negotiations because we believed that this deal needed to have border security in it and DACA. For a group that said, basically, we don't want to deal with border security, they were no longer interested in us, which took us to a stalemate of really getting this resolved, which took us to 2 weeks ago.

On Tuesday, the President invites us over in a bipartisan, bicameral conversation to say: We have to get a plan here. This is stuck. During that meeting with the President, with 26 House Members and Senators together from both parties, we make an agreement that there will be four areas of this final agreement and that these will be the negotiators to be able to pull it together—the Republican and Democratic whips from both the House and the Senate. Those four individuals will be the individuals to pull it together, and they are going to get that done. That was on Tuesday.

By Thursday of that week, a smaller subgroup of the group that I had been kicked out of went back to the President and said: No. We have a better idea. Let's try to do this instead. I know, on Tuesday, we agreed to the other process, but we have another idea to kind of end-run that whole process.

Clearly, it upset a lot of us to say that we are trying to do a bipartisan deal, that we are trying to work this through the process, that we are trying to be of good faith in this. So far, there have not been good faith negotiations on border security at all. We cannot deal with the issue of individuals who are in our country illegally, even if we as Americans see them as neighbors and friends and future citizens of our country, and ignore how it happened in

the first place. That would not be responsible of us.

Now, there are some who want to say, "This is because you are just, simply, a racist," which is infuriating and inaccurate and belittles the conversation. To stand up and say that the only reason you think this is because you are a racist is trying to shut down the conversation, not engage in it. These are my friends and neighbors as well, but we are legislators, and we have a responsibility to solve issues, not to belittle each other and not to make false accusations.

There are millions of people who have crossed our border to be able to work or connect with family. I fully understand that. Many of them live around my place, go to church with me. I get that completely. There are also many people who cross our borders because of crime, and we would be foolish to ignore that reality as well. There are people who cross that border to be able to traffic drugs, to be able to traffic in terrorism, to be able to move people—human trafficking, labor trafficking. We should have a secure border set up for that.

Again, this used to not be a partisan issue. In 2006, Senator SCHUMER and, at that time, Senator Obama voted for the Secure Fence Act, which put in 650 miles of fencing on the southern border. Let me say that again. Senator SCHUMER and Senator Obama and a lot of other Democratic Senators, who are still here, voted for the Secure Fence Act in 2006 to put in 650 miles of fencing on our southern border. This didn't used to be a partisan issue, and it shouldn't be today. Border security is not partisan. It is national security.

The proposals that have come out at times amaze me. Let's actually get serious about trying to resolve these issues. Basic border security issues should involve not just some fencing in some areas or walls in some areas or technology in some other areas or adding additional manpower in other areas. Those are reasonable things along our border that every country in the world has organized.

It also involves dealing with some of the gaps in our law if someone crosses into the United States. These are things that need to be addressed—for instance, the removal of multiple felony criminal illegal aliens. Why is this controversial? This shouldn't be a controversial issue at all, but for some reason, it is. To end the practice with greater fines and penalties for people who smuggle in people for profit, why would that be controversial? For some reason, it is.

We are dealing with additional judges because we have 600,000 people in a backlog in our immigration courts—600,000 people in our immigration courts in a backlog. Why would that be controversial to have to deal with a backlog? We are behind on family members who have petitioned to be a part of this country but who were—get this—20 years in a backlog. Why would

that be controversial to say that we need to divert some of our attention to catching up on the backlog?

There are a lot of issues that we need to deal with, and this is a complicated issue. But for other Members, can I just say that we are very close to negotiating this, that people have actually acted in good faith in negotiations. But saying "We will shut down the government until you do it our way"—and their way was an end run around the whole stated process that we all agreed on—seems absurd to me, and it certainly seems absurd to the Federal workers in my State who are now going through chaos this afternoon because some people wanted to make an end run around the process that was already in place.

Let's finish the process and not create some artificial cliff and chaos to try to say "Do it my way, or I will shut down the government." Let's finish the process. There are willing partners on both sides, and there are reasonable proposals to finish out what we have already started and worked on for months to get through this process.

I thank Senator TILLIS for the engagement he has on this because he and his team have worked exceptionally hard. My team and I, both in my State and here, have worked exceptionally hard on these issues, and we want to get them right. Senator CORNYN and his team have worked exceptionally hard on these issues.

Let's do it, and let's get it right, but let's not shut down the government while in the middle of negotiations because people want to have it their way and not actually finish the negotiations we started.

With that, I yield back.

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, I am pleased to see Senator CORNYN here. He has done an extraordinary job. As a matter of fact, it was Senator CORNYN who hosted the trip that I made down to the border that gave me an incredibly important perspective on the case for border security. I appreciate his leadership on this issue.

I want to leave a final comment for the DACA population. Some people say: What is the crisis? We have until March 5.

I understand that every single day you wake up, that day seems like today. I know we need to move more quickly. Quite honestly, we could have gotten this done a couple of months ago if people had engaged, recognized their differences, and accepted a compromise. We are doing everything we can to get done much sooner than March 5 because we understand that they are our teachers, our EMTs. There are 900 serving in the military. They are hard-working people. They are kids in school. There are hundreds of thousands of good people—in a proposal that we put together, over a million—that we want to welcome into this Nation because they are great citizens, they love this country, they are productive citizens, and I want them to

know that we know that. I want them to know that there are dozens of Republicans prepared to vote on a compromise bill that is balanced, that brings border security and provides certainty to the DACA population. We are going to do everything we can every day that we are here to make sure that we deliver on that promise.

Madam President, thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, let me say publicly what I have said privately to Senator TILLIS and Senator LANKFORD.

Thank you for your leadership.

They have done an extraordinary job trying to come up with a solution to the issue, the problem, the challenge that they have already described. I would like to add a little color to some of that, but they have done extraordinary work to try to come up with a compassionate but legal framework by which we can resolve this issue.

I have been in the Senate since 2002, and I have been through the immigration wars more times than I care to count. We keep working very hard on this issue, and we always seem to come up short. I come from a State that is one of the most diverse States ethnically in the country, and that is because we have been a big job creator, and a lot of people have been moving there looking for opportunities. We have a large Hispanic population. It makes sense. We are Texas, after all—used to be a part of Mexico. About 38 percent of my constituents are Hispanic, and I know that is a large part of the population we are looking at when it comes to the Dreamers. There are about 124,000 Dreamers in my State and others who are eligible who, frankly, are in a little bit of a box, not knowing how to deal with their situation.

When I think about immigration, I think about the two great pillars that have made our country great. No. 1, we are a nation of immigrants. We have benefited from the fact that people have fled religious persecution. They have fled poverty. They have come to the United States to experience the sort of freedom that our country has guaranteed to each and every one of us and the opportunity to pursue the American dream. That, to me, is one of the great things that have made our country the envy of the world. The other part and the part that I think sometimes people tend to overlook and forget is, what makes America great? We are a nation of laws. We are a nation of immigrants, and we are a nation of laws. When we forget either one of those pillars, I think we risk damaging this wonderful inheritance that we have gotten from our parents and grandparents and people who have gone before us.

I view this responsibility that we all share together here in the Congress as a sacred trust. We are the stewards of

that inheritance. Shame on us if we don't do everything within our power to pass that on to the next generation and beyond.

By way of a little bit of background, I think sometimes people get—it is just natural. We become familiar with these terms like “DACA.” People may be listening on TV, saying: What in the heck is DACA?

We say: That is a easy. It is deferred action for childhood arrivals.

They ask: What is that?

We say: We are talking about the Dreamers.

That is what Senator DURBIN and others have talked about because there is something called the Dream Act that has been introduced and has been advocated for. Basically, what we are talking about are children—now young adults—who were brought into the United States by their parents, and their parents came into the country illegally—that is, they didn't comply with the normal process of applying for citizenship; they came into the country. We all understand why, what motivates a lot of people. A lot of people think, well, I am going to short-circuit the process, jump to the head of the line.

The fact is—and I think Senator LANKFORD said this—in the United States, we don't hold children responsible for the mistakes of their parents. So these children—now young adults—who maybe are able to pursue an education, many of whom have become very accomplished, simply are in a box. I think we have a moral obligation. We have an obligation to ourselves and to our great country to try to take advantage of the talent they have to offer and to help them become full-fledged participants in this great country of ours.

I remember being over at the White House in 2012 after the November election. Speaker Boehner was there. Congressman MCCARTHY, the majority leader, was there. Senator MCCONNELL, the Senate majority leader, was there. I was there. President Obama was there, along with his staff. The President had for some time threatened to try to deal with this population, this sympathetic population that we are talking about, that we want to try to provide some assistance to. He was frustrated with the slow pace of Congress, and so he was just going to do it by himself. That is what we mean when we talk about deferred action for childhood arrivals. President Obama decided to make an end run around Congress, which has the primary responsibility on immigration matters under the Constitution, and to do it by himself.

Well, haste makes waste sometimes. What happened is that these 690,000—I think at one point it was as many as 700,000 or 800,000 who have actually qualified. Many have dropped off. About 690,000 young adults signed up for this deferred action for childhood arrivals, which allowed them some security but also gave them access to work permits.

Can you imagine what their reaction was when the Federal courts held that what President Obama did was not legal? It was illegal.

When President Trump came into office, he did, I believe, the right thing and said: The courts have spoken. This is not something the President can do by himself or herself; this is something in which Congress needs to get involved.

So he kicked it over to Congress. Thankfully, he gave us some time to act. I believe the date is March 5, after which DACA beneficiaries or recipients can no longer apply for a 2-year period of deferred action. That is exactly the right thing to do because it has precipitated this debate, it has precipitated these negotiations, and it has precipitated a reality check for many of our Democratic friends that, you know, we are a nation of immigrants but we are also a nation of laws.

One reason why I believe this President was elected was because people were enormously frustrated with the lack of border security, with the failure to enforce our immigration laws, and with President Obama's end run around Congress to try to do this unilaterally. This is what precipitated the sorts of negotiations in which we have all been engaged. Senator TILLIS and Senator LANKFORD have been leaders in that effort, putting together an incredible effort to come up with a compassionate and lawful solution and one that respects both of those pillars of our legacy—a nation of immigrants and a nation of laws.

That is why it is so offensive to me for the Democratic leader to decide he is going to ignore the needs of all the children. I think there are roughly 9 million children who benefit from the Children's Health Insurance Program. He is going to give our military the back of his hand—and military families—by holding our needed support for them hostage so that they can somehow force us to deal with this DACA situation today or last night, and if we don't do it, they are going to shut down the U.S. Government.

These 690,000 young men and women truly should be the subject of our compassion, but why would we hold 320 million people hostage to try to get a solution for these 690,000, when we are already hard at work to try to negotiate in good faith an outcome? It just makes no sense at all to me.

I appreciate the meetings that we had that Senator TILLIS alluded to. The one at the White House—I think it was Tuesday. Was it last week? It seems like a year ago. President Trump invited the press into this bipartisan, bicameral meeting. Ordinarily, what happens after the press comes in and takes pictures and asks a few questions is that they are ushered out, but President Trump let them stay in the Cabinet Room for about 45 or 50 minutes. It was the most incredible experience I have ever had, certainly, in that sort of context dealing with sensitive issues like immigration.

I think it was a very positive meeting because it provoked instruction by the President for Majority Leader MCCARTHY; the Democratic whip, Senator DURBIN; the majority whip, Senator CORNYN; and STENY HOYER, the minority leader in the House. We were instructed to do what Senator TILLIS described earlier: come up with a solution to this problem and address the DACA population.

How do we show some compassion? How do we get these young adults out of a quandary not of their making but also deal with border security? I happen to come from a State that has 1,200 miles of common border with Mexico. Senator TILLIS described his experience with Senator HELLER. I was happy to host them because I think seeing it is worth a thousand words. Hopefully, they enjoyed the experience and learned something from it as well.

The Texas-Mexico border is about 2,000 miles long. What the Border Patrol has told me is that they need various tools to secure the border. They need infrastructure like the Secure Fence Act that we voted on in 2006. Then-Senator Obama and then-Senator Clinton and Senator SCHUMER, the Democratic leader, all voted in favor of the Secure Fence Act. Some people call it a wall. Some people call it a fence. Some people call it tactical infrastructure. Whatever you call it, it is a barrier. It is an essential component of border security at some parts of the border, but it is only part of the system.

The system needs to include technology—whether it is unmanned aerial vehicles, ground sensors, radars, aerostats that we saw high in the sky—to try to protect our country against transnational criminal organizations that exploit our porous border to import poison, illegal drugs; that traffic in children for sex or other illicit purposes; or that import their gang members into the United States, only to wreak havoc on communities here in the United States. The object of most of the mayhem associated with that porous border is the immigrant communities in the United States. People act as if there is no negative downside to this porous border and illegal immigration, but I will tell you that frequently the devastation that is wreaked on Americans and on people living here in the United States is in immigrant communities, where these folks do most of their harm.

We are working very hard to try to come up with a solution, and it is frankly insulting that the Democratic leader would try to jam this through and hold hostage all of these other very important programs when we are working in good faith to try to meet that March 5 deadline, and I have every confidence we will. But the border is a little more complicated.

One of the things Secretary Nielsen, the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, has pointed out is that because of a provision in the U.S.

law, if you immigrate illegally into the United States from Mexico, for example, the Border Patrol can offer you the opportunity to go back rather than process you for illegal immigration and later deport you, but not if you come from a noncontiguous country, like Central America—Guatemala, El Salvador, for example, Honduras. So what we have seen is thousands of people coming across our southern border exploiting that loophole in our law.

Let me give one example. I asked Secretary Nielsen the other day: If there is a 17-year-old man—you may call him a boy, but for all practical purposes, he is a man, but he has not yet reached 18. If you know from his tattoos—frequently, that is how gang members are identified by the Border Patrol law enforcement officials, from the tattoos they bear. So you know they are members of the MS-13 gang, one of the most violent gangs emanating from Central America and actually Los Angeles, as well, and many of them have migrated back to Central America. Many of them prey on children back there but come up here as part of the drug distribution networks in the United States.

If you know this is a member of MS-13, but they are 17 years old, is there anything you can do under existing law to bar them from the country? She said no.

Under the law, they are required to process that person because he is a minor technically, even though he is a man for all practical purposes, and then Health and Human Services must then place him with a sponsor in the United States. It might be a relative. It doesn't have to be a relative. The previous administration didn't even vet those sponsors adequately, so we don't know how many children who were placed with those sponsors may have been preyed upon, trafficked, recruited as gang members, or otherwise abused.

But this 17-year-old young man, a member of MS-13, would then be placed with a sponsor in the United States and be told, if he had claimed asylum, to come back in a couple of years for his court hearing before an immigration judge.

Senator LANKFORD, I believe, stated that hundreds of thousands of people are backlogged for hearings before immigration judges. We need more immigration judges. In the process, they are told to show back up for a court hearing years in the future, and only about 10 percent show up. I used to say this was sort of an intelligence test—tongue-in-cheek. If you showed up, you flunked the intelligence test, because what most people do is they exploit that vulnerability to simply melt into the great American landscape and become a danger, frankly, to the communities in which they ultimately settle. So this is serious business.

My constituents in Texas—all 28 million of them—want a compassionate solution for these DACA recipients. I mentioned that there are 124,000 of

them who signed up, and there are others who were eligible who did not sign up because they are afraid of the government. They come from places where government is their oppressor frequently, so they have a hard time trusting government even when government is trying to help them in the United States.

My constituents want a solution, but they are sick and tired of the Federal Government failing to do its job on the border. An international border is by definition a Federal responsibility, but the taxpayers in Texas are required to pick up the tab when the Federal Government doesn't live up to its responsibilities, and that has been the status quo for as long as I can remember.

It is frankly galling to hear politicians here in Washington, DC, say: Well, we need to do something to help immigrants—and I am happy to do it as the occasion arises, where it is appropriate, particularly like the DACA recipients. Others, I think, need to be deported as soon as we can because frankly they are a danger to the rest of the law-abiding communities here in the country.

It is frustrating to hear people talk about just one of those two pillars I mentioned. They say: Yeah, we are a nation of immigrants, and we should welcome immigrants. But they don't want to do anything about our porous borders, and they couldn't care less about making sure we have enough border security to protect us from the drugs, the traffickers, and the violence that finds its way into communities all across our country.

So here is the problem: Funding for the Federal Government expires at midnight tonight, and a partial government shutdown will occur if we don't pass a continuing resolution. Our colleagues in the House did their job; they passed a continuing resolution to keep the government up and running until February 16.

I really had a hard time believing what I heard my friend Senator SCHUMER say last night. He said we need to kill this continuing resolution because we need to pass another continuing resolution because continuing resolutions are bad for the military. Well, he lost me on that argument because it makes no sense. It is true that continuing resolutions are bad for the military. That is why we need to get into a regular appropriations process. But does he think a shutdown is good for the military? Does he think a shutdown is good for the 9 million children who depend upon the Children's Health Insurance Program? I think his priorities are completely out of whack.

In my home State, just to take one example, the Army Medical Command said that 2,539 civilian employees at Joint Base San Antonio will be subject to furlough, representing \$188 million in salaries. Some 12,000 Texas Guardsmen won't be able to drill either. I am aware of the Presiding Officer's distinguished service in the Guard, and she

knows what I am talking about. They won't be able to train, they won't be able to prepare for deployments to protect the homeland, and, of course, they won't get paid.

It is estimated that 200,000 Texans will be furloughed with the government shutdown, so it is not just the folks who live in the DC area here in Washington, Virginia, and Maryland, where we have a lot of government employees; people across the country will be negatively affected too.

Our Democratic colleagues' strategy to hold the military funding and children's health insurance hostage is a complete and shameless reversal of what they claimed in the past. It is a complete and shameless reversal. In 2013, the senior Senator from Illinois said that a shutdown is "no way to run a country." He decried what he called "political brinkmanship," saying we need to stop "manufacturing one crisis after the next." Well, I wish he and his colleagues would look in the mirror and listen to their own previous comments. America needs them to.

The truth is, as the Senate majority leader has said, our friends on the other side of the aisle do not oppose a single thing in the bill that the House passed yesterday. They don't oppose anything in the bill. The Senate majority leader is right that this should be an easy "yes" vote for every Senator in the Chamber. The bill continues government funding, prevents a needless shutdown, and, as I said, extends a key health insurance program for vulnerable children.

How in the heck did we get here? How did the Democrats decide that no was the right answer? Well, we worked hard last month and all this month to try to negotiate long-term spending caps that would bring stability back to government funding. One of the biggest issues was to try to make sure we funded our military in a way that helped them prepare and get ready to fight our Nation's wars or, better yet, to prevent future wars by demonstrating the kind of strength and leadership the people have come to expect from the U.S. military. But our Democratic leadership made it clear that they would stall a final agreement on those spending caps until this unrelated issue of deferred action for childhood arrivals that we have been talking about, which doesn't expire until March 5—they were going to hold all the rest of that hostage until it was resolved. They made it clear that they were willing to shut down vital programs for the rest of the country because we haven't agreed on how to resolve that issue, but we are working hard on it. I had another meeting here today on that. I have actually had three meetings today on that topic, and we are going to get it done before the deadline.

While that issue is important and affects roughly 690,000 people, our country is made up of over 320 million people—people who pay taxes, people who expect the Federal Government to

work for them. They sure don't expect to be not paid or laid off or furloughed, if you are a government employee. If you are a citizen expecting the government to provide some service but because the bills aren't being paid because Democrats have shut down the government—well, you are being denied access to the services you have a right to expect.

Our Democratic colleagues are engaged in a dangerous game of chicken, and they could well crash the government just to appease extreme elements in their party, and all of it, every bit of it, is absolutely unnecessary.

Let's call this what it is. Our colleagues are playing favorites and turning their backs on military families and the security needs of the American people. I think that after they had a good night's sleep last night, they probably woke up this morning thinking: What have we done? How do we get out of this? That is why I know the President called Senator SCHUMER, the Democratic leader, over to the White House earlier today. The report I got was that Senator SCHUMER said: Let's have another short-term continuing resolution, maybe until next Tuesday.

Well, that wouldn't solve anything. That would make none of this better. It would just continue the chaos and leave all the things we need to settle, unsettled.

Well, the President did the right thing. He told him: Look, you go back and you talk to the Speaker and the Senate majority leader and you guys work that out. This is what you get paid for. Get her done.

That is good advice.

The threat of a shutdown by the Democratic leader and his colleagues ignores the overwhelming majority of this country that suddenly feels they are not as important as the few they are focused on—the DACA recipients. All Senate Finance Committee Democrats voted for a 5-year SCHIP extension in October, so they are now actually threatening to vote against a program that Senate Democrats on the Finance Committee voted for. I guess, in the immortal words of John Kerry, they were for it before they were against it. Have they forgotten that if Democrats shut down the government, nearly 9 million kids could lose their CHIP coverage? And why? Because we haven't yet been able to come up with an agreement on something—an immigration issue—but our deadline isn't until March. It is not yesterday. It is not today. It is not until March 5. We hope to get it done earlier. I expect we will.

Have they forgotten the 78 percent of defense workers who could be furloughed, laid off; that Active-Duty troops, as well as Guard and Reserve members, would not get paid? In Virginia, there are some 178,000 Federal workers. In Maryland, there are over 145,000. I hope they are on the phone calling their Senators and their Congresspeople. Those are two States

that are both represented by Members prepared to shut down the government tonight. In Texas, as I said, there are some 200,000 Federal employees. All of them will be affected, and everybody else who depends on them to protect our State and our communities—or to provide services that benefit everybody else—they are going to be negatively impacted too. Paychecks could cease, services will be disrupted, all because of an unrelated immigration issue that will not get resolved if the government shuts down.

That is what is so maddening. Shutting down the government will not solve that problem. I think they are out over their skis, and they are trying to figure out how do we get this thing back and save face in the process. They are realizing this is a very bad judgment call and that their action was entirely disproportionate to resolving the issue they want to resolve—and one we are determined to resolve with them in due course.

Let's recall that the 2013 shutdown resulted in the furlough of 850,000 employees and billions of dollars of lost economic productivity. So when the senior Senator from California said yesterday that the results of a shutdown are extremely dire, she wasn't being hyperbolic. She wasn't exaggerating when she talked about the big risks that lie ahead if we don't act. Well, I pray she and her Democratic colleagues will stop stalling, stop playing favorites, and stop daring us to engage in a game of chicken.

I will say it again one last time. We have been negotiating in good faith on a solution for the DACA recipients, and we will continue to do so, but shutting down the government will not solve that problem, and millions of people, including our military, law enforcement, and emergency personnel, could lose their paycheck if Democrats follow through on their threat.

The time to stop playing games is now. We urge them—no—we implore them: Do not shut down the government.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I rise to express my support and to highlight the importance of reauthorizing the Children's Health Insurance Program, CHIP.

CHIP expired in September, causing great concern and worry for families and providers who depend on this program to care for our Nation's neediest children. Many States have been operating on reserve funds, which will soon run out. It is time we provide the program with the necessary funding to take care of America's children.

I know Arkansas families who rely on the program to provide medical care for their children are pleased with the inclusion of a 6-year reauthorization for CHIP, including in the legislation before this Chamber. This would mark the longest extension for the program since its inception.

I thank Chairman HATCH, the original author of CHIP, for his dedication to the health of our Nation's children, and his bipartisan effort with Ranking Member WYDEN that brought a 5-year CHIP reauthorization out of the Senate Finance Committee last fall.

Approximately, 50,000 children in Arkansas—and nearly 9 million low-income children nationwide—receive healthcare through CHIP. Currently, these children, their families, and providers are living in a cloud of anxious uncertainty.

Take for instance this story of a young Arkansan:

In Little Rock, a precious little girl marks the milestone of turning 8 months old tomorrow in the care of Arkansas Children's Hospital fighting an infection. She has been in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit and other floors there since the day she turned 2 months old.

Her mother has four other children and spends every hour she can at her daughter's bedside. Every one of those hours is an hour spent away from the baby's brothers and sisters, two and a half hours away in Fort Smith.

Again, she has other children she is trying to take care of at the present time.

In addition to her child's medical condition, her mother is worried because her daughter's care is covered by CHIP.

As much as she looks forward to bringing her daughter home, this mother knows that even those supplies she needs to make that happen—the tubes, the medicines, the fluids—all of those are at risk without that coverage.

This story highlights the reality so many families are currently facing. Failing to reauthorize this important program would have real, direct, and serious consequences.

We must work to ensure these families need not worry every year—or, as of now, months—about continued access to benefits for the health and well-being of their children. We must commit to passing this extension to provide these families peace of mind and stability.

Arkansans recognize how important this program is. My office has received significant amounts of inquiries on the issue. Our response has always been the same: Everyone in Congress is working in good faith to find a solution—at least it seemed that way until a few days ago. I would have supported a 5-year reauthorization like the one my colleagues on the other side of the aisle were pushing for, and guess what. We did even better with a 6-year reauthorization attached to the current CR.

Now those same Members who had been asking for a 5-year reauthorization just days ago are refusing to support the longest extension of the program since its inception. That is not negotiating in good faith. That is not being part of the solution. That is being part of the problem.

Additionally, I continue to be frustrated by this unfortunate new normal of continuing resolutions and stop-gap measures to fund the government year after year.

The idea of willingly facilitating a government shutdown is reckless, but, unfortunately, it appears that some of my colleagues prefer stalemate over robust debate. We need to keep the government open and solve our differences through regular order, understanding, and compromise. Governing by hostage and crisis does not fulfill our moral and our constitutional duties to the American people.

We must not lose sight of our shared goals and purpose or the impact our decisions here have. We must aim to use the power of our offices for good. Supporting children's healthcare and passing this continuing resolution is certainly a component of that goal.

I hope my colleagues remember the story I shared today—and the stories I know they have heard from their constituents—and vote in favor of children's health.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, midnight is approaching and a government shutdown is looming in front of us. I would say—as we can tell in this city—there are not a lot of things Senators will agree on, but I think there is one thing that just about every Senator I have spoken with does agree on; that is, we have a budgeting and spending process that is broken.

In fact, the first bill I introduced in Congress was a bill that simply said: If Members of Congress can't pass a balanced budget, they shouldn't get paid. Nobody here likes to see CR after CR. CR stands for continuing resolution.

Think about it. We have a government that starts its fiscal year every year on October 1. I spent 28 years in the private sector, and 13 of those years were with Procter & Gamble, a Fortune 500 company. I spent time in a small family business, and I spent time as part of a cloud computing startup that grew over 1,000 jobs. We took the company public. So I have had a lot of experience in budgets, management spending, and ensuring that you actually take in more money than you spend because that is all profit in business.

Here in Washington, DC, we are now—October, November, December, middle of January—we are 3½ months into the fiscal year without having nailed down the spending plan. It is broken. That needs to be reformed.

On a more optimistic note, there is a group of Republican and Democratic Senators who are having discussions about how to change the way the budgeting and spending works in Washington, DC, to deliver a better outcome for the American people.

Here we are at this moment, just hours away from a looming government shutdown. So whether we are in business or dealing with issues in personal life, we have a choice to make right here in front of us—a choice we have to make in less than 7 hours. We can either keep the Federal Govern-

ment open and fund health insurance for 24,000 Montana children—it is about 9 million American children. The idea was, let's put something in play that ought to be agreeable to both sides—something pretty clean, not a tax with a bunch of political, divisive kind of issues. No, we are going to extend the funding of the government, avoid a government shutdown, and let's permanently reauthorize, for 6 years, the Children's Health Insurance Program. It is very popular with the American people. Either we do that or we shut the government down.

Here is where we are. There will be a lot of folks spinning a lot of different messages, but let me try to articulate exactly where we are in as simple terms as possible. The House has passed an agreement to keep the lights on and to fund Children's Health Insurance. They passed it. The President has said he will sign that agreement to keep the lights on and to fund Children's Health Insurance. The House has passed it, the President says he will sign it, and now it is up to this body.

Will we get 60 Senators—it will take Republicans and Democrats—because there are only 51 Republican Senators, and the rules of the Senate require 60. Will we get 60 Senators—a good bipartisan vote—to keep the lights on and fund Children's Health Insurance? That is the question. We have less than 7 hours to figure that out.

I implore my Democratic colleagues not to follow their leader, who insists that DACA and illegal immigration get fixed today, in the next 7 hours. We all know illegal immigration is a very important issue for our Nation. It has to be addressed. We must secure our borders, and we must resolve this issue, but let's keep it all in perspective.

In my home State of Montana, there are less than 100 DACA residents versus 1 million Montanans who would be hurt by a government shutdown. A shutdown hurts our men and women who wear the uniform. To say it another way, the choice is between 100 DACA recipients—less than 100 in Montana—or the 24,000 children who depend on the Children's Health Insurance Program.

Don't let these issues get confused by smoke and mirrors. That is the fundamental issue right now that CHUCK SCHUMER and the leaders of our friends across the aisle are talking about shutting down the government over.

The right thing to do here is to vote yes today. Let's continue to fund the government while we work to address these issues related to illegal immigration and border security.

Senator LANKFORD was here earlier. There are good bipartisan discussions going on as we speak. These are difficult issues to get sorted out. They are divisive issues, but I think there is a path forward. To me, to say they have to get resolved tonight or shut down the government is the wrong position to take.

A shutdown means no long-term certainty for Montana's children. A shutdown hurts our military. A shutdown hurts our veterans.

I don't like another CR. I would rather not have another CR. But guess what. You get paid to come here and make a choice. Sometimes it is between two options; neither one is very appealing. I don't like the idea of having another CR. It is just an example of a broken budgeting process. But the choice is that either we buy some more time to resolve these issues of illegal immigration or we shut down the government, harming our military, our veterans, our seniors, and compromising national security. I believe a government shutdown is a mistake.

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I rise to talk about some of the issues we are facing as we approach a deadline tonight, but I really wanted to start with one observation about where we are and where we could be in the next couple of days.

Some of the debate is focused on simply what could happen at midnight were there to be a shutdown of the Federal Government, but there is another alternative, of course, and that is—well, two, really: to have an agreement that would carry forward before the deadline. That is, in my judgment, less likely to happen. I don't think anybody believes that would happen, necessarily, but the other option, of course, is to have a number of days ahead of us—3 days, 4 days, whatever the leadership on the two sides can agree to—to continue negotiations because, of course, we have a range of issues. Sometimes we haven't talked enough about the long list of issues. I will get into a few tonight, but there is a rather long list of issues, some of which have already been the subject of not just consensus but a bipartisan piece of legislation, actual bill text that has been introduced or could be introduced in short order, in the next few days or even the next couple of hours.

Then there are other issues where there have been ongoing issues for a long period of time, haven't reached consensus, but if we all give ourselves a deadline and stay here—and I hope people in both parties will stay for the next few days no matter what happens tonight. If there is an extension of 3 or 4 days, that doesn't make it any less challenging because that just means there will be a short-term deadline. I don't think it makes any sense to go another month because the can, in essence, will be kicked down the road again.

We need to make decisions about some big issues. There are some who have observed that even if you were in favor of the measure that came over from the House last night, which I have

real trouble with—a lot of gaping holes in that proposal, a lot of urgent matters for many Americans that have not been addressed in that proposal—but even if you favor that, you can also still hold the position you don't favor continuing resolution after continuing resolution. I guess we are on our fourth resolution, if we have the right count, since October 1—not that long ago.

So that is at least my sense of where we could be in the next couple of days: not leaving Washington and staying at the negotiating table on a range of issues. That is the reasonable thing to do, not only to keep the government operating and open but also to finally resolve some major issues, which I think most of both parties want to solve.

Let me start tonight with some personal letters. One of the major issues which is not resolved, but there has been a lot of effort made which is bipartisan, is the issue of pensions. I have received letters from a lot of Pennsylvanians who say: Look, it is up to you and up to the people in both parties to solve this pension crisis which has engulfed so many families. In Pennsylvania, if you add up the categories of people affected—retirees and their families—you are talking about at least 35,000 families, usually because the largest share of retirees are coal miners in Pennsylvania. I am sure it is true in other States as well.

I got a letter from a woman in Washington County, PA, right in the southwestern corner of our State. I will not read the whole letter, but she was talking about her husband who is a retired miner. She said: "He worked for many years in the coal mines and endured dangerous conditions, unsafe work hazards, and a mine fire which he narrowly escaped and closed the mine forcing him to lose his job."

She concludes by saying: "This pension is so important to him and to us"—and she goes on from there.

That is one person talking about her husband doing the most dangerous work imaginable. I am not sure there is a more dangerous job in the world than coal mining, and I know of what I speak because of the corner of Pennsylvania I am from, the anthracite coal region.

Here is another letter from the same corner of the State, Southwestern Pennsylvania, in this case, in particular, talking about the pension legislation which is before the Senate right now, the so-called Butch Lewis Act. Here is what this man says about his family, talking about the way he earned a pension. He said:

We gave up pay raises, to get a meager pension, and as we get older we can't start over. Please [pass . . .] the Butch Lewis act.

A third letter, also from Southwestern Pennsylvania—in this case from Westmoreland County, one county over, just to the east of Pittsburgh. This individual talks about the pension he received. He said: "I am facing pension cuts that will have an immediate

and devastating impact on my family." He goes on from there.

We have even more letters. A letter from the same corner of the State, Fayette County—one of the great counties of Pennsylvania in the most southwestern corner, right next to Greene County, right on the Ohio or West Virginia border, depending on which side you are looking at.

This individual said to me in the letter:

[T]here are so many retired miners, widows and families that rely upon those benefits each month. Including my mother and me, she is a widow and I have cerebral palsy and we depend on my dad's pension to survive on the limited income.

So the miner is speaking about the pension they earned and their hope and expectation, which is a reasonable expectation that the promise made in that pension would be fulfilled, or it is the perspective of a son or a daughter or a wife or even, unfortunately, in many cases, a widow talking about a miner who had passed away.

Here is another letter from Southwestern Pennsylvania, talking about that word I just used, "promise."

This [pension] was a promise made by the government. . . . we kept ours . . . and now we hope that you will continue to KEEP THE PROMISE.

"KEEP THE PROMISE," all in capital letters, by this individual.

I am 73 years old and if I was to lose my pension, my wife & I would be forced to live in poverty.

Here is another pension letter. This is not from a coal miner but from a retired truckdriver—another group of Americans affected when the U.S. Senate doesn't get pension legislation done, like we can do in the next couple of days. "I am a retired truck driver . . . spent 25 years of my life in this occupation . . ." and asking me as his Senator "if you could do whatever you can do to preserve that pension for my wife and I."

Another letter from the northeastern corner of Pennsylvania, not far from where I live, talks about the same act, the Butch Lewis Act. In this case, the letter is about his father: My father, for over 25 years, was paying into a pension. He was a dock worker, physically loading trucks by hand. He did this to provide for my family and to ensure we had medical coverage and also a pension.

Then it talks about a pension. His dad was told at one point that the pension was wiped out, that everything he had worked for was taken away. He worked hard for 25 years—nights, weekends, double shifts sometimes, on and on and on.

I heard from the majority leader last night that somehow these kinds of issues that are part of this larger debate are not urgent. He said the only urgent matter is the government funding bill. I would agree that is urgent, but I would also agree that if you are a retired coal miner or the family of a retired coal miner or a retired truckdriver or you are owed a pension of any

kind for all the work you did in your life, your situation is urgent. It is not something we can put off and say: Well, why don't you wait another 6 months? Wait for a couple more CRs—continuing resolutions—and we will get to you later.

The pension issue is as urgent as any other. There is a lot of talk around here as if it isn't. It is very, very urgent.

I will give you another urgent issue—the issue of community health centers. Here is a letter I received from South-eastern Pennsylvania—just outside of Philadelphia—about funding for community health centers, which, just like the pension issue, is not addressed in the House proposal or the House bill that passed. They don't address pensions. They don't address community health centers. By the way, the deadline for community health centers, just like children's health, was way back in October—October 1.

I am glad that some Republicans are finally—finally, after more than 100 days—starting to clue in a little bit to children's health insurance. They are talking about it. It is great that they are finally talking about children's health insurance, which they haven't talked about much since they let the deadline expire months ago. The majority party allowed that to happen. Maybe by midnight tonight they will start talking about community health centers that serve 800,000 people in Pennsylvania. I hope they start talking about it at least, and maybe we can come together and get something done.

Here is what she says about community health centers: We serve hundreds of thousands of underserved people who deserve the quality of care we provide. They have lives filled with trauma and in turn suffer from social, physical, and behavioral issues that will go untreated if funding for community health centers go away.

I guess that is not urgent. If you rely upon a community health center for your healthcare, it is urgent. It is every bit as urgent as anything we have talked about in the last couple of days and weeks. The House bill does nothing on that, nothing on miners' pensions, nothing on pensions, nothing on community health centers. And we are supposed to just accept that and move on and have another continuing resolution when they don't even address it in their proposal.

Here is another letter about community health centers. This one is about the patients who live in rural and underserved areas, who are in areas where there is a great need for health centers. I guess it is not urgent for those folks in rural areas who depend upon these health centers. As I said, in Pennsylvania, if you look at the total—rural and urban and everything in between—it is 800,000 people. I guess it is not urgent for them. This House bill does nothing for those community health centers and those people who live in rural and urban areas who depend upon

those health centers. I guess we should just wait—wait another month, wait another 6 months, wait another year—for community health centers to be funded. The majority allowed funding for those to expire, just as they allowed funding for children's health insurance to expire.

Here is another letter that talks about health centers. This individual says:

If Congress kicks this can down the road one more time, it will be a signal to health centers that we need to implement measures that will result in site closures, layoffs and reduced services.

I guess community health centers are not urgent.

How about this program that is also not addressed in the House legislation—the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program. This is an evidenced-based home visiting program that supports at-risk pregnant women and young families. It is a great program that has been in place for the last couple of years. In fiscal year 2017, funding was about \$400 million. That is not addressed either. I guess that is not urgent, just like community health centers and just like pensions for retired coal miners and truckdrivers and others. None of this, apparently, according to the majority, is urgent. None of this is urgent.

I will tell you what was urgent for the majority at the end of last year, November and December: an obsession with getting a tax bill passed, which did pretty well for the superrich and big corporations. There was all kinds of time for that—negotiations between and among Republicans, discussions and changes in the bill, between and among Republicans only, for a tax bill. That was very urgent. To get that tax bill rammed through—that was very urgent, so children's health insurance had to wait even though in December it was already 2 months overdue, 2 months after expiration. Community health centers had to wait, as well, because you had to get your Republican tax bill done. All of that had to wait. Coal miners' pensions had to wait, too, because you had to get the tax bill done for the rich and for corporations.

How about the issue that received a lot of attention, the so-called DACA Program, the Dreamers? Right now, we have seven Senate Republicans, at last count—it might have gone higher—seven Senate Republicans have joined with Senate Democrats on a bipartisan bill to do a lot of things but principally improve border security and help young Dreamers. That is a bill that is ready to go right now, and it is urgent because people have been deported, and both parties assert that they are concerned about these Dreamers. We could get it done right now. One Republican Senator said he could get it done in half an hour. Let's say he is way off—maybe an hour and certainly a few days. We could get that done as well.

There is a lot that is urgent, and there is a lot that is left on the table

with this House bill that came over last night.

I hope both parties continue to negotiate. I hope we will heed the words that were sent out last night by the Defense Department. Here is what Dana W. White said:

We have been working under a Continuing Resolution for three years now.

Meaning the Defense Department.

Our current CR expires tomorrow, 19 Jan. This is wasteful and destructive.

She hopes and I think our military hopes that we don't keep kicking the can down the road. Let's come together and get so much done for the American people that we can get done tonight, tomorrow morning, tomorrow night, Sunday morning, Sunday night, Monday morning, Monday afternoon, Monday night, Tuesday. We can stay here and get a lot of this done, and then we can move on to other things. We can get a major list of problems solved, not this House bill full of holes that leaves so many Americans out, leaves coal miners out, leaves truckdrivers out. It leaves millions out. By one estimate, 27 million people in the country get their healthcare at community health centers, 800,000 in Pennsylvania. We could do all that, bring the country together, and then move on to other issues that we haven't discussed yet, such as infrastructure, fixing roads and bridges, and bringing broadband to rural America. Fill in the blank with whatever else you want to work on, but there is a lot we could do.

The President said that he wanted to make infrastructure a priority. It is going to be difficult to get to that if we keep getting stuck on these 3-week or 2-month continuing resolutions.

I know there has been a lot of chatter today about blame games. Look, according to my count, there might be only one politician in the country who has spoken directly and I think repeatedly, but at least once that we know of, about a government shutdown, and that happens to be the President.

I will hold up this poster, which is a statement dated May 2. "Our country needs a good shutdown," said the President on May 2, 2017. I hope the majority will not agree with that, that our country needs that. We need to come together and use this opportunity to do the following: Fund the Federal Government. Make sure retirees have the pension they have been waiting for for a long time. Coal miners have been coming to this town for years now trying to get their healthcare. They were promised that in early 2016. It didn't happen because the majority made them wait. They were promised in 2016—later in the year—that it would happen in the fall when the Finance Committee got the coal miners healthcare bill done. It didn't happen in the fall. The majority made them wait. Then, of course, they said: Oh, no, but after the election, in December of 2016, it will get done then. But the majority made them wait. After months and months of pressing, these coal miners finally got the promise fulfilled by

getting their healthcare in April of 2017.

At the time, they said: We appreciate the fact that we got the healthcare problem solved. Now we need to work on the pensions.

So the pensions for coal miners didn't start in April of 2017. That was part of the original bill, but we were only able to get the healthcare part of it done. So miners' pensions goes back much further than the early part of 2017; it goes back to 2016 and 2015 and years before that.

I would hope that before we move to bringing the sides together, that we would make those pensions and those retirees a priority. I would hope we would make community health centers a priority, as well as getting done for children what we should get done.

One point about the Children's Health Insurance Program. I am glad that my Republican friends are finally talking about the program. They were rather quiet the last couple of months when they refused to bring it up on the floor. Of course, everyone knows that if you put a CHIP bill on this floor tonight, it would pass in minutes. We would get an overwhelming vote. If the majority really cares about it, they would do just that, just as we have been asking for months. But, of course, children weren't a priority because they had to get a tax bill done. That was the big priority. They had to get that big tax bill done so that the corporations would be happy with Republican Senators.

Let me make one point about children's health. We have to get that done as well, but the problem is, for a lot of reasons, the cost has changed a good bit. Here is the reality. The CHIP program, according to this proposal, is limited in time to 6 years. If Republicans included a 10-year extension, it would actually save billions of dollars and, more importantly, would remove us from the cycle of funding crises to which we have grown accustomed.

If it is less expensive and provides more certainty, why don't we do CHIP for 10 years? I would like to make it permanent. That would be the best result, the optimal result. But why not 10 years? Because of a whole series of dynamics that happened over the last couple of months, the cost has actually gone down. If you can get a cheaper rate, so to speak, for a 10-year extension, why not make it 10 years? I know the Freedom Caucus and House Republicans came up with 6, but I thought they wanted to save money, and I hope they want to save money and help kids. I hope we can come together on that as well. Let's make it a 10-year commitment to our kids. I think the Senate Republicans passed a tax bill that had a corporate tax break that is permanent—permanent tax relief for big corporations. Why not at least give children's health insurance and the children who depend on it at least 10 years. Give them a decade, right? That is not a big sacrifice. Of course, it would be

better if we gave them permanent certainty like the corporations got with their taxes. At least give them 10 years. Now that both parties are beyond the 5 years, let's give them 10 years, and it will have the added benefit of saving billions of dollars.

We can do all of this in the next number of hours and days. We can get all of this done, and then we can move forward in a bipartisan way on to other priorities. We cannot, simply, accept a measure from the House that is full of holes—that does nothing for those retirees, that does nothing for community health centers, that does nothing to address the opioid crisis. We didn't get into that, but we could easily be funding more for our local communities.

I hope we don't listen to this statement here that somehow this is something that is good for the country. We need to stay here and continue negotiations and, in some cases, wrap up promising negotiations that have already reached a consensus. We should stay here tonight and Saturday and Sunday and Monday and Tuesday at least. That is not asking much to negotiate hard for 4 days. Let's see what we can get done in a couple of days and see where we are.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment at 10 p.m. tonight.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I come to the floor on the verge of what could be a government shutdown.

I have listened to my colleagues throughout the day suggest—particularly on the other side of the aisle—that this is only about Dreamers. Dreamers should be able to realize their dream. I have been as passionate as anyone about believing that these young people, who only know one flag, the flag of the United States, its stars and stripes; who only sing one national

anthem, the Star-Spangled Banner; and who only know one country, the United States of America, have, and should have, the opportunity to ultimately realize their dream. They responded to the Federal Government's requests that they come forward, register themselves, give us all types of information, trust us, and they did. Now the government must respond to them, but what is going on here is beyond Dreamers.

This is the Federal Government hurtling from short-term funding resolution to short-term funding resolution instead of having the appropriate appropriations pass when they were due last October—last October—instead of working to pass the necessary appropriations to keep the government not just operating but to do it efficiently, on an annual basis, so our institutions can appropriately plan and so we can save money instead of spending more money because of what it costs for short-term preparations.

Our Republican colleagues were busy, yes, but they were busy in October and November and December not preparing for the government's needs but to have a drive in ecstasy toward tax cuts for the wealthiest people in the country and large corporations on the backs of middle class and working families. That is what they spent their time on. Then they come and say: Oh, but it is urgent that we do this now. You had months in which you did nothing—nothing.

Now, I must say to my friends—and I have heard many of them who are budget hawks and deficits hawks—this is no way to run a government, much less the greatest country on the face of the Earth. Who wants to dictate to countries about being responsible, when we want to give them assistance or we are trying to get them to do trade things, and this is the image we send to the world?

Now, only in Washington—I have been here a while. Only in Washington could Republicans, who control the House of Representatives, the U.S. Senate, and the President of the United States at the White House, try to blame a Democratic minority for their failure to govern. Let's be clear why we are here today. Instead of providing our military, our first responders, our healthcare centers, and all of our Federal agencies with the long-term funding they need to efficiently and effectively serve the American people, Senate Republicans want to pass yet another—another—another stop-gap, woefully insufficient, short-term continuing resolution.

In fairness, I tried to give my Republican colleagues the benefit of the doubt. I voted for the first continuing resolution. I voted for the second continuing resolution, but enough is enough.

I got my start in local government. I was a member of a school board, and I was a mayor, and then I served in the State legislature. Let me just say, there is no place from my past experience that you could do what we do

here. You needed to have a budget done on time. Maybe you might lapse a day—what would have been for us last October—but you couldn't get beyond that. You couldn't do that in the State legislature for the State budget, couldn't do it on the city council, couldn't do it on the school board. Families can't do it in their own lives. We shouldn't do it on behalf of the 320-some-odd million people who call America home.

Now, the CR—this continuing resolution to keep the government open one more time, for the fourth time; not the first time, not the second time, not the third time but the fourth time because we are all basically about tax cuts for the wealthy but not taking care of everybody in terms of government funding—kicks the can down the road again without making the necessary investments into our communities. It continues the chaos and the dysfunction that has defined the last year of Republican control. It doesn't fund community health centers, something I am so proud of in my home State of New Jersey—federally qualified health centers. They take everybody who comes through the door—all taken. You have insurance? Great. You don't have insurance? We will take care of you. You have Medicaid or Medicare? Fine. Bottom line, a system that delivers quality healthcare. This doesn't do it. It leaves them in the lurch out there.

The CR doesn't set budget numbers to fund national security or domestic investment priorities. We talk about our national defense—and, yes, I am one of those who is willing to plus-up national defense—but guess what, the nondefense side of the budget is about homeland security, the FBI, the Secret Service, the Treasury Department, the National Institutes of Health that protects us in terms of illnesses, the CDC—all of these elements are in the domestic discretionary side of the budget so they are important, too, but we don't fund budget numbers that allow the national security or domestic investment priorities to take place.

I heard Leader MCCONNELL say last night that the CR is about helping all Americans. Well, I will tell you, it doesn't do squat for the 3.5 million Americans who call Puerto Rico their home and who are suffering in an appalling human catastrophe in the wake of devastating storms. It doesn't adequately assist communities in Texas and Florida and Western States that are ravaged by fires that are still waiting for Congress to act on disaster relief. Even the Secretary of Defense's spokesperson said we have been working under a continuing resolution for 3 years now. Our current CR expires tomorrow. This is wasteful. This is the Secretary of Defense's spokesperson: This is wasteful and destructive. We need a fully funded fiscal year 2018 budget or face ramifications for our military.

I would add that these young people—many of them who wear the uni-

form of the United States and are willing to risk their lives and die for the country that seems to want to reject them—they deserve an opportunity to have a resolution at last.

Let me just say, I know the President has said that maybe the country needs—would benefit from a good shutdown. I don't ever think there is a good shutdown. I know, in the past, when President Obama was in the White House, then Mr. Trump said: Oh, it is the President who is the leader. It is the President who has to bring everybody into the room. It is the President who has to get people to come to a conclusion.

Well, you showed up late in the game—very late in the game—the final hours.

Finally, I think all of us who have been around either this institution or the Congress know that you need 60 votes in the U.S. Senate. I have compromised many times on foreign policy. I compromised with my colleagues to try to achieve a solution for the DACA legislation. There were hard choices to be made and things I don't like, but I compromised. Let me tell you something. Sixty votes, you don't even have your 60 votes. Two of our Republican colleagues have said—I understand why because they don't want to keep kicking the can down the road: No, we are not going to vote for this. One of our colleagues is infirm, not here. So they are not anywhere even near their numbers.

So that means, when you need 60 and you are far from it, that you have to engage in a negotiation and a compromise. It is not just stick it and accept it because when that happens, then we are on the dangerous path that when this short-term resolution doesn't solve itself—if we agree to a month—then ultimately we will have another CR, and maybe we will like even less what is in that CR. Maybe there will be language that we will find particularly problematic. Maybe there will even be numbers we don't care for.

The point is, if you know you need 60, you don't wait until the final hours to try to come to a negotiation.

I would rather live a day on my feet than a life on my knees, in defense of the 9 million people who call New Jersey home, to make sure they get what they need, not what I am shafted to try to have to accept.

So I personally am for a very short-term resolution that makes leadership and the White House and all of us, as far as I am concerned, stay here working to achieve what the American people deserve, which is a full funding of their government—no more short-term lurching from crisis to crisis. This is an opportunity to take care of those Americans who have been hurt in hurricanes and storms and fires and the people of Puerto Rico; an opportunity to give Dreamers their dream; an opportunity to fund our public health centers; an opportunity to fund the Children's Health Insurance Program

not for 6 years but for a decade. We have seen study after study that says we could save millions if we funded it over a decade. Why should we not save millions?

This is an opportunity to deal with the pensions that people who worked a lifetime and, through no fault of their own, now find themselves possibly shortchanged. Let's help them retire with the dignity they deserve.

This is an opportunity to make sure the National Institutes of Health—which is doing ground-breaking research on the Alzheimer's that took my mother's life, on the Parkinson's that affects our neighbors, on the diseases that affect our people, but you can't do long-term trials if you don't know what your funding is going to be. The list goes on and on.

The people of America deserve far better than what they are getting, and I reject the proposition that you can just stick it to us and suggest that we have to accept it. You create the crisis and then you want us to accept it.

Well, it is time to get the job done on behalf of the American people. That is why some of us will not support a longer term funding resolution, because all it will do is get us right back to where we are today. The American people deserve much more than that.

They deserve that, and there is no reason we can't deliver that.

With that, I yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

NOMINATION OBJECTION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I intend to object to any unanimous consent request at the present time relating to the nomination of David J. Ryder, of New Jersey, to be Director of the Mint, PN1355.

I will object because the Department of the Treasury has failed to respond to a letter I sent on September 29, 2017, to a bureau within the Department seeking documents relevant to an ongoing investigation by the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. Despite several phone calls between committee staff and Treasury personnel to prioritize particular requests within that letter, the Treasury Department has to date failed to provide any documents.

My objection is not intended to question the credentials of Mr. Ryder in any way. However, the Department must recognize that it has an ongoing obligation to respond to congressional inquiries in a timely and reasonable manner.

MARCH FOR LIFE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the Iowans who have traveled to the Capitol today to be with us for the March for Life.

I commend them and the many other Americans who have traveled here