

decades earning their pensions and now see them at risk as they prepare to enter retirement, and we must follow through on our most basic of duties. We need a bipartisan deal to fund the government that takes care of the men and women who serve our country in the armed services, keeps us safe, and properly funds both our military and domestic programs.

This will not be easy, but solving easy problems is not why we were sent to the Senate. I ran for the U.S. Senate to solve the tough problems facing our country, and I know my colleagues in the Common Sense Coalition ran to solve tough problems as well. We need the entire Senate and the House to start acting like one, big Common Sense Coalition. No organization or business can run their budget in 2- or 3-week increments.

The Defense Department and all of our domestic agencies need certainty for budget planning just like any household or business does. We cannot let the American people down any longer by kicking the can down the road with another series of short-term budget patches. The coming weeks will be difficult, but we need to rise to the occasion and deliver on all of these responsibilities. Now is the time for us to step up our game. The American people expect and deserve nothing less.

I yield the floor.

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. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

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

#### TRIBUTE TO JONATHAN MILLER

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I rise to honor a member of my staff, Jonathan Miller, who has dedicated his life to serving his country and his State.

Not only does Jonathan serve the people of Ohio each day on our staff, helping Ohio servicemembers and veterans, but he also wears the uniform himself, first as a member of the National Guard and now as a member of the Army Reserve. Earlier this month was his last day in the office for a year as his unit is deploying to fight for our country.

Jonathan grew up in Macedonia, OH, and graduated from Nordonia High School and Ohio University. In 2011, while working toward his master's degree, he enlisted in the National Guard. Jon told me he enlisted, in part, because he was "inspired by the debate and repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell and the stories of veterans in my family," like so many who join the armed services because of patriotism, family values, and family precedent.

He said: "The Army seemed like the place for me to help my community and my country and to experience new people, places, and ideas."

Jonathan went through officer candidate school in 2013 and now serves with the 300th Chemical Company, Army Reserve, out of Morgantown, WV. He has worked in our office since 2015 and has impressed all of us with his dedication to both of his jobs. In the Senate, he handles veterans and military issues along with energy and environmental policy. He has read, literally, thousands of letters from Ohio servicemembers and veterans over the years and has always worked to make sure their views and concerns have been heard and that our office has helped them whenever we have been able to. He has often called the families directly to follow up and listen to their stories.

In 2016, during a meeting with the Gold Star Wives of America, Jon learned that education benefits for some spouses who had lost their loved ones in the earliest days following 9/11 would expire before they could make full use of this benefit their families had earned. He immediately brought this issue to my attention, and we worked to introduce the Military Spouses Achieving College Education for Survivors Act. We passed this bipartisan legislation as part of a larger veterans package that will directly affect veterans and their families in my State, in Nebraska, and other States across the country.

Jonathan has played a critical role in ensuring that our military installations in my State have the support they need to perform critical national security missions—from the 180th in Toledo and the 910 in Youngstown, to Camp Ravenna, to the base in my hometown of Mansfield, to Springfield, and of course to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. He often attends visiting Ohio Honor Flight ceremonies, representing our office and supporting Ohio veterans who visit the memorials that have been built in their honor.

His love for the outdoors and for Ohio has also shone through in his work on issues like protecting the Great Lakes, including the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and in preserving the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, which is near his childhood home.

I would add that Ohio is one of the lucky States east of the Mississippi in that it is one of the few States that has a national park, and it is not far from the population centers of Cleveland and Akron. Even though the Trump administration tried to zero out—the way we talk about it—or dramatically cut funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, I and Senator PORTMAN, a Republican, worked together to restore that funding.

We know keeping Lake Erie clean is an ongoing challenge. Right off the city of Toledo, Lake Erie is only 30 feet deep, contrasted with Lake Superior, which is 600 feet deep, on the average.

That means, whether it is Ashtabula and Cleveland in Lake County to the east or it is Toledo to the west, Lake Erie is much more vulnerable to pollutants than are the other Great Lakes. This is why the work Jonathan does is so important in keeping that Great Lake clean.

At the end of the week, while others might look forward to a relaxing weekend with family and friends, so often, Jonathan heads out for drill with his unit. He used to drive from Washington to Illinois and, later, to West Virginia for the weekend as part of his service. Now his unit is deploying. While we will miss his expertise, his enthusiasm, and his unique perspective in this office this year, we are also so grateful for his service to Ohio and to our country.

One final note, before his deployment, last month, Jon got engaged to his partner Kevin. Jon and Kevin will join so many of Ohio's military families who understand the unique challenges of having a family member serving far from home.

One of the things that is so important that we as Members of the Senate must do is recognize the service of our men and women in uniform. We should also recognize the importance of the service and sacrifice of those family members who are left behind and who often live in the margins financially.

On behalf of my whole office, we congratulate Jon and Kevin on their engagement. We wish Jon well on his tour overseas, and we thank him for his sacrifice and his service.

#### CHIP AND COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

Madam President, Congress finally did the right thing, after having failed to do the right thing in September and October and November and December and early January, by reauthorizing the Children's Health Insurance Program. The bill passed out of the Senate Finance Committee with only one "no" vote. The Children's Health Insurance Program has been around for 20 years, and it has always been bipartisan.

There are 209,000 children in Ohio who benefit from the Children's Health Insurance Program. These are children—sons and daughters—of parents who generally work full time but who only make \$8 or \$10 or \$12 an hour. These families often don't have insurance themselves, but the Children's Health Insurance Program will provide insurance for those children.

It is particularly aggravating to many of us that so many Members of Congress—all of us who have health insurance provided by taxpayers—failed to continue the program, which has always been bipartisan, in September, when the program expired, as well as in October and November and December. Now, as our vote the other day demonstrated, the Children's Health Insurance Program will be around for 6 more years as we continue to make improvements with it. The problem is, while we provide insurance for 6 more years for these 209,000 children in Ohio and 9 million children all over the country, we

haven't, in so many cases, provided the place and the environment for these parents to take their children.

One big shortcoming is Congress's refusal to do its job to reauthorize the community health centers, the so-called federally qualified health centers. My State is home to several dozen federally qualified community health centers. They provide all kinds of healthcare services, in many cases, including pediatric, dentistry, all kinds of preventive care, all kinds of emergency care, and other help for so many families, particularly for low-income families, in their neighborhoods, where this can make a difference.

I want to briefly share three letters to illustrate the importance of this.

Stephanie Wiersma, the CEO of Lorain County Health & Dentistry, wrote to me 2 weeks ago before we passed the most recent continuing resolution:

We desperately plod on, doing all the right things for our health centers and patients, yet for months we have been in limbo and, frankly, sick with fear.

I worry about the impact on my staff and patients. I know the impact on recruitment of providers . . . what professional wants to chance a funding crisis to come work for a health center at this point in time?

Open provider positions means less access to care, plain and simple. Access is especially important now with all the flu and illness going around.

What Stephanie is saying is that when Congress doesn't do its job—when all of us who have health insurance that is paid for by taxpayers fail to do our jobs—these community health centers, which are professionally run and close to home for so many families, cannot plan for the future. They cannot recruit a physical therapist or a pediatric dentist or an internist or a family practice doctor. Is a professional provider, who has invested a lot of money in her education, going to want to go to a health center where Congress simply doesn't do its job in providing funding? I think Stephanie wrote that so very well.

Jared Pollick, CEO of Third Street Family Health Services in my hometown of Mansfield, wrote:

It is nearly impossible to make sound strategic decisions for our organizations without the security of our funding. We are always told both sides of the aisle love Community Health Centers. We really need them to show it with funding.

That is exactly right. I have heard my Republican colleagues talk almost ad nauseam about how much they like the Children's Health Insurance Program, how much they like the community health centers, and I think they really in their guts do. But then Senator MCCONNELL and the Republican leadership let them expire on September 30, did nothing in October, nothing in November, nothing in December. They did a tax cut for the rich. We know that, but they didn't reauthorize, didn't provide additional significant, predictable, sufficient funding for the community health centers or the Children's Health Insurance Pro-

gram. A week ago, finally, we did the Children's Health Insurance Program, but we left hanging the community health centers.

The last letter is from Julie DiRossi-King, chief operating officer for the Ohio Association of Community Health Centers, which represents 512 health centers in Ohio. She said:

We have hit that critical point . . . that the Community Health Center Program as we know and rely on it today will soon be on life support. There literally is no room for additional delay.

I appreciate that Congress finally did the right thing on the Children's Health Insurance Program. I ask Congress to do what is right for the community health centers. It will literally save lives and will matter for so many families in my State and States all over the country.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WICKER. 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. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time be yielded back on both sides and the Senate proceed to the vote.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the James nomination?

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Mr. SCHUMER. I announce that the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), and the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 89, nays 1, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 24 Ex.]

YEAS—89

Alexander	Boozman	Cassidy
Baldwin	Brown	Cochran
Barrasso	Cantwell	Collins
Bennet	Capito	Coons
Blunt	Cardin	Cornyn
Booker	Carper	Cortez Masto

Cotton	Isakson	Roberts
Crapo	Johnson	Rounds
Cruz	Jones	Rubio
Daines	Kaine	Sasse
Donnelly	Kennedy	Schatz
Duckworth	King	Schumer
Enzi	Klobuchar	Scott
Ernst	Lankford	Shaheen
Feinstein	Leahy	Shelby
Fischer	Lee	Smith
Flake	Manchin	Stabenow
Gardner	Markey	Sullivan
Gillibrand	McConnell	Tester
Graham	Menendez	Thune
Grassley	Merkley	Tillis
Harris	Murkowski	Udall
Hassan	Murphy	Van Hollen
Hatch	Murray	Warner
Heinrich	Nelson	Warren
Heitkamp	Paul	Whitehouse
Heller	Perdue	Wicker
Hirono	Peters	Wyden
Hoeven	Portman	Young
Inhofe	Reed	

NAYS—1

Sanders

NOT VOTING—10

Blumenthal	Durbin	Risch
Burr	McCaIn	Toomey
Casey	McCaskill	
Corker	Moran	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The Senator from Alaska.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

## RECOGNIZING THE ALASKA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY NORDIC SKI TEAM

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, every week, I have been coming to the floor, going on 2 years now, to talk about what makes my State, the great State of Alaska, such an amazing place to live—gorgeous, untouched mountains, the glaciers, the wildlife. I have live web cams in my office. For people who want to see the bears, walrus, the salmon spawning, bears scooping up these amazing fish from the choked streams, please come on by. Most of that happens during the spring, summer, and fall. The winter, of course, is the longest season in Alaska. In my opinion, it is one of the best times to experience our State.

For those watching on TV or in the Gallery, we want to welcome you to Alaska. Come on by. You will have the trip of a lifetime. I guarantee it.

It is truly the people who make my State such a truly special place. What we try to do each week is talk about