

If it comes to that, I look forward to it. I would like to see the Senate work its will, and I hope that we will come up with a positive and constructive compromise. We have only 3 days from today for that process to start, and I hope that we can make some progress. Bipartisan legislation to protect the Dreamers has been pending in Congress, and it has overwhelming support from the people we represent, including President Trump's own voters. It would pass on a strong bipartisan vote in both the House and the Senate if Republican leaders would bring it to a vote.

I look forward to that debate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

FUNDING THE GOVERNMENT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I spoke yesterday about the deadline we have coming up in 2 days. The question is, Are we going to fund the Federal Government? Are we going to keep the lights on, the parks open, the military protecting us, the Border Patrol protecting our borders, or are we going to shut down the government again over an unrelated issue?

I listened to my friend, the Senator from Illinois, talk at some length about DACA. I do want to respond to that, but there is no reason we have to do DACA first, because we are engaged in good-faith negotiations, and, indeed, the majority leader has promised that he would take up a bill on the floor of the Senate in our failing to reach an agreement.

The fact is that our friends across the aisle have, basically, shut down the government and are now threatening to hold hostage a number of very important measures, which I will talk about momentarily, over this issue that is unrelated to the funding of the government or to these other matters.

So what have we had to do?

We have had to pass short-term continuing resolutions. We have had five of them since September alone. The impact of these continuing resolutions was brought home to me again yesterday.

Usually, I would think about our military and General Mattis, who has pleaded with us to help provide the additional resources that are necessary to make sure that our military is ready, is trained, has the equipment it needs in order to fight and win wars but, hopefully, to maintain our strength so that we will never have to fight a war. That is how Ronald Reagan viewed it. I agree with General Mattis: Peace through strength is the right formula.

Yet, when our adversaries look at us with our military—just a pale reflection of what it used to be in terms of readiness because of the lack of funding we have provided—that is a provocation or, at least, an invitation for others to step in and fill the void, and it leads to a more dangerous world.

As I said, the harm caused by these continuing resolutions was brought home to me again yesterday when I had a number of people with the Texas Association of Community Health Centers come visit. These community health centers are a vital link and safety net for many Texans and many Americans who don't otherwise have a place they can go for their medical care. They treat people based on a sliding scale, based on the ability to pay, so they are accessible to virtually everyone.

What my constituents with the Texas Association of Community Health Centers told me was because of the funding cliff with the continuing resolutions, they don't know how to plan. Their doctors, their medical assistants, and other support staff don't know if they are going to have a job after Thursday, February 8, when the current continuing resolution expires.

They don't know whether the patients they treat will actually have a place to go to get that treatment. This is a miserable way for Congress to do business, and it should not continue. We need to provide more certainty and predictability.

General Mattis himself said that this basically wastes money because we have to plan to shut down portions of our activities if, in fact, government does shut down. So then we have to restart it again—stop it, start it. It is a waste, it is inefficient, and it is unnecessary.

Our friends across the aisle need to release another hostage, too, in addition to the spending caps agreement and the funding needed for our military and the funding needed for community health centers and all the other important functions that are served by the Federal Government. They need to release the hostage of disaster relief.

In December, the House passed an \$81 billion relief package, but so far our Democratic colleagues have refused to allow us to bring that disaster relief bill up. Again, why? Because of DACA, this unrelated immigration issue that they think is more important than all the people who were hurt by Hurricane Maria, Hurricane Harvey, and the wildfires out West.

We do need to address DACA, and we will, but why hurt the victims of these natural disasters in the interim by holding this disaster relief hostage? It is time we stand up in a bipartisan fashion and show these folks in Texas, Florida, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and out West that we remember, and we are going to help them. Why should they have to wait any further? There is no good answer to that question, but I think it is important that somebody come out on the floor of the U.S. Senate and ask the question.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I said I wanted to talk about the issue our Democratic colleagues shut down the

government over last month, and that issue is immigration and the path forward on DACA. DACA, again, is Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals. This is something President Obama did unilaterally, circumventing Congress, assuring that in a new administration, it would be called into question, not only in the courts but also by the new administration.

President Trump, recognizing that the courts had effectively said what President Obama tried to do was illegal, basically continued it for a time to give Congress a chance to try to respond, and he has given us a deadline of March 5. I heard my friend from Illinois blame President Trump for trying to fix a problem that was caused by an overreach by the previous administration. Don't take my word for it, take the courts which struck down the DACA Program.

President Trump has continued it long enough to give Congress a chance to fix it. That is the appropriate response. It is not helpful just to engage in the blame game. We actually need to step up and not just give speeches on the floor of the Senate; we need to actually enter into a good-faith negotiation.

To date, President Trump has issued a reasonable framework that will not only give protection to those who were brought here illegally by their parents as children but also fixes other gaps in our broken immigration system—border security, the diversity lottery visa, and ensures that people who are waiting in line patiently can be unified with their family by narrowing the scope of family-based immigration in the future. That is prospective only. One proposal has been to plow those additional green cards into accelerating the passage of people who are patiently waiting in line—some as many as 10 and 20 years.

President Trump has done something President Obama never did. He has offered 1.8 million young adults who are currently DACA recipients and DACA-eligible an opportunity to get on a pathway to American citizenship. That is three times more than the young adults who were addressed by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program that President Obama did unilaterally. That is an incredibly generous offer.

What has the President requested in return or in addition? He said: Secondly, I want to secure our borders, and I want to address legal loopholes in the current law. That is important because we have to protect our citizens and regain the public trust. One of the very reasons this President was elected is because people are angry that the Federal Government has failed them when it comes to securing our borders and enforcing our laws. I believe the second pillar of what President Trump has talked about, border security, is really a system of physical infrastructure—fence, walls, barriers—but also technology and personnel; that those

are the three essential ingredients in border security. We have to ensure that people don't flout the law and enter the country illegally. We all know a porous border is an opportunity for drug traffickers, human traffickers, and other criminals to exploit our porous border. As I said, it is not one-dimensional, it is not just about a wall or a fence or a barrier, it is about technology, personnel, and physical infrastructure as well, and the President has acknowledged as much.

I have heard our colleagues across the aisle bridle at what the President has requested in terms of not only a plan for border security but also for the funding. He said he wants \$25 billion to make sure the Federal Government finally steps up and lives up to its responsibility on the border. It wasn't that long ago when the Gang of 8—Senator DURBIN my friend from Illinois was one of the gang members—proposed and the Senate passed a bill by 68 votes that provided \$50 billion for border security. It had other problems, but they were more than generous in providing for border security. Today they chafe and resist and refuse basically to negotiate on this item, when they voted for double that amount in the so-called Gang of 8 bill just a few years ago.

The President's third pillar relates to what is known as the diversity lottery visa. Many, including the President, have questioned whether it makes sense to just give out 50,000 green cards a year based on a lottery—a game of chance. They have suggested and the President has proposed that we use those green cards to reward skill and merit.

We ought to look at immigration as a way for us to attract the best and brightest, the people who have skills, talents, education, something to offer their new country when they come here. We don't have to end the diversity part, but we can add to it the skills that would help make our country better and allow these new citizens to contribute in a substantial way to their adopted country.

The fourth pillar addresses family unification. I say "family unification" because I think the recently adopted alternative term of "chain migration" has become a pejorative and oversimplifies a very complex area of the law. What the President has proposed is, in the future, we allow people to immigrate to the country based on family relationships, and we confine that to the nuclear family—mom, dad, and the kids. One suggestion has been that the green cards we would save by not allowing collateral family members to come in—married adult children, aunts, uncles, cousins, and the like, based strictly on the family relationship—we could plow those green cards back into the backlog because there are people who have been playing by the rules and waiting patiently in line, some for 10 or 20 years because of the caps we put on country immigration.

Why doesn't it make sense to let them reunite with their family members even faster so they don't have to wait so long? I think that makes an awful lot of sense. During the time that backlog clears, there really wouldn't be any reduction in legal immigration.

I don't know what the right number is for legal immigration. We naturalize roughly about 1 million people a year. I support legal immigration. I think it makes our country better, but I am not sure exactly what the right number is, and I am not sure exactly what the right formula is. A number of countries, such as Australia and Canada, look at the skills and merit-based system, in addition to family relationships. I think that makes a lot of sense to me.

While we are continuing to have this discussion about what should be the long-term rate of legal immigration, it makes sense to plow these additional green cards—that will not be used prospectively by collateral family members based strictly on that family relationship—back into the backlog and unify the families who have been waiting for their loved one who has been waiting in line, waiting to immigrate legally into the United States.

One thing I really appreciate about the President's proposal is, it addresses shortcomings of the so-called Gang of 8 bill that was considered back in 2013. This is where I differ again from my colleague from Illinois. He celebrates the fact that they were able to get 68 votes in the Senate, but it didn't pass the House, and it never got to the President. I am not sure that is a cause for celebration. What I would actually like to see is us take the President's four pillars and actually get a Presidential signature on a law that passes not only the Senate but the House and that the President will sign. I thought that was the goal, not just to go through some futile gesture or to pass one branch of the legislature only to fail in the House.

The reason the Gang of 8 bill failed in the House was because it had some serious problems. It had no real objective metrics to determine where technology and infrastructure would be the most effective. It didn't allow the Department of Homeland Security to achieve 24/7 situational awareness and 100 percent operational control of the border. It didn't adequately address the personnel and infrastructure improvements we know are desperately needed at our northern borders and our ports of entry.

Finally, even though the Gang of 8 bill contains some provisions to address criminal gangs, drunk drivers, and aggravated felons, it also had generous waivers and still allowed some criminals to qualify for legal status. That didn't make any sense to me then, and it makes no sense to me now. Why would we allow people with criminal records to immigrate into the United States?

Worse, the Gang of 8 bill didn't end catch-and-release of criminal aliens,

and it did nothing to deter the influx of people who are exploiting a loophole in the law relating to unaccompanied minors. By way of contrast, the new White House proposal addresses these concerns in ways the flawed Gang of 8 bill did not, and I predict, if we embrace the President's four pillars and pass a bill that reflects those requirements, the House of Representatives could pass it, and the President would sign it, which would actually then provide a pathway to citizenship for 1.8 million young people.

I don't know how some of our friends can look these young people in the face and say: We had the chance. You had the opportunity to receive one of the greatest gifts a human being could possibly accept, and that is a pathway to American citizenship, but we turned it down. Perhaps, we miscalculated, and we figured that, maybe, we can get it through the Senate but we can't get it through the House and we can't get a Presidential signature. So we ended up emptyhanded, and you remain in the same box you were in in the first place. How is that helping these young people? It is not.

Well, the White House proposal closes loopholes in the current law that are being exploited by criminal gangs and human traffickers. Let me explain. Under the current law, if somebody is under 18 years of age and shows up at the border, the Border Patrol processes them, and then they are given to Health and Human Services. If they make a claim of some immigration benefit, they are given a notice to appear before an immigration judge, but the backlog there is so great that it could be years down the road, and then they are placed with a sponsor.

Here is the problem. First of all, there is no adequate monitoring of these individuals to make sure they actually show up for their court hearing. Current law allows them to be placed with a sponsor that is not legally present in the country in the first place. There are no criminal background checks. So we don't know whether these unaccompanied children are being placed with people who would abuse them, traffic them, or recruit them into criminal gangs.

In 2017 alone, the Department of Homeland Security apprehended 41,000 unaccompanied minors across the southern border, and 37 percent were between the ages of 15 and 16, and another 32 percent were 17 years old. So we are not talking about young children. We are talking about, by and large, grown young men. As I mentioned earlier, this number has increased significantly, with more than 11,000 unaccompanied minors being apprehended in the last 4 months alone.

They have figured this out. The transnational criminal organizations that traffic in human beings, drugs, weapons, and anything else that is worth a buck have figured this out. They have a loophole in the U.S. law that allows them to charge a fee to

bring in these young men, who may or may not be a member of MS-13, one of the most violent criminal gangs in Central America. Now they are unfortunately in the United States, and there is no way for the U.S. Government to keep them out even if they are gang members, under current law.

Well, I don't know how our colleagues who refuse to take up this issue and address it justify it. I just can't understand it. In my opinion, we have a real problem that our colleagues either don't want to fix or they are deliberately ignoring. We can't solve these problems by just putting our head in the sand and hoping that the problem goes away. It will not. This is just one example of a loophole, which a border security bill that I introduced months ago, called the Building America's Trust Act, would fix.

So if our colleagues are serious about coming up with a solution to our immigration problems and providing a lifeline to these young adults who are DACA recipients and, indeed, everyone who is DACA-eligible, they need to work with us. They need to recognize the reality that President Trump has laid out a pathway for that to happen, but they can't just cherry-pick and pick the parts they like and ignore the rest and expect that we are going to get an outcome.

Again, the basic failure in the Gang of 8 bill was that they got 68 votes in the Senate, including \$50 billion for border security, but they couldn't get it through the House and couldn't get it to the President for signature. I don't know how to sugar-coat it, but that is failure. That is not success. Success is to get a bill through both Houses and to get the President to sign it. President Trump has given all of us a map, a pathway for how to do that. To my knowledge, there has never been a counteroffer that addresses the four pillars that the President has proposed.

Again, I think the people with the most to lose out of this proposition, in addition to the great American people, are these young adults who would benefit from the stability and predictability and a path forward and would receive a gift, as I said, that would be the greatest gift that any human being could possibly aspire to, which is the gift of American citizenship, eventually. But it is going to be squandered. The President's generous offer will be squandered because our colleagues don't like his proposal, but they are unwilling to come up with a counteroffer so that we can actually have a negotiation. The President, I am sure, would welcome that counteroffer, and we would too.

We welcome an opportunity to actually get a result here, to make a law and not just go through a political exercise that is destined to end in failure and then become a political issue in the next election. That is not what we should be about here.

So I hope that reality will set in. President Trump has offered a pro-

posal. Our colleagues on the other side, who don't like the proposal, have not offered a counteroffer that meets the four pillars. They don't even want to pay attention to the last two—the diversity visa issue or the so-called family unification, sometimes called chain migration. They want to act like that doesn't exist, and I just don't get it.

I come from a State of 28 million people, with 38 percent, roughly, of Hispanic origin. We have a 1,200-mile common border with Mexico. Texas taxpayers pay for the border security that the Federal Government fails to fund and facilitate. I want to see a solution. I am happy to vote in favor of a pathway to citizenship for 1.8 million people, but I can't go back home and look my constituents in the face unless I tell them that this is the last time we are going to have to do this because we fixed the underlying problem—border insecurity, gaps that are exploited by criminal gang members and the transnational criminal organizations that traffic in them, and these other issues that the President has put on the table.

So I hope reality does set in because I really would like to get a bill that we could pass in the House and the Senate and get to the President for his signature and move on to these other important issues: How do we fund our military? How do we fund the community health centers? How do we provide some predictability to the rest of America that is being held hostage to this issue?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). The Senator from West Virginia.

CIVILITY AND TRUST

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss something extremely important to each one of us in this wonderful body, which is called civility and trust. I rise to discuss them because they have been lost in Washington. I look around and we are all friends, and for some reason we lost trust in each other. We don't seem to spend enough time with each other.

I can remember Senator Robert C. Byrd, who was the longest serving Senator in the history of the U.S. Senate, and he always told me what a place this was. He said that the Senate is something special. He even wrote a book about it, about how the Senate was to operate, what the Founding Fathers' intent was for the bipartisan, bicameral body that George Washington explained so eloquently, and what our role was as the most deliberative body in the world. The whole world depends on us kind of cooling things off and making things work. But as we have seen, it hasn't done what it is supposed to do, and it is not to blame one person or the other or one party or the other. I guess we can all say that it is all of our fault for letting it denigrate to this point.

Several years ago, I took a personal pledge. I just knew something was wrong. When I first got here, I looked around and I saw that we were all expected to make phone calls raising money every day to our respective parties, and that money would be used for a couple of purposes. The purpose was basically to set an agenda or explain your priorities and your policies, but a lot of that money was directed toward defeating colleagues on the other side. So being in the Democratic caucus, the Democratic money was supposed to be raised and, if any one of my friends on the Republican side was up in this cycle, that money was supposed to be used against them. I thought that was wrong, and I know a lot of my Republican friends feel the same way—that they are supposed to be making phone calls to raise money to be used against me and everybody else who is up in this cycle. I am sure they feel the same as I do.

I have often said that I come to work in a hostile work environment, and I try to explain that in terms of how we in West Virginia would look upon this. If you go to work every day in my State of West Virginia and your colleague or some person with whom you are working is trying to undermine and undercut you to get you fired, and every day you go to work they are nice to your face but behind the scenes they are doing all they can to denigrate your work or to make your supervisors believe that you are not doing your job, back home in West Virginia, sooner or later, they are going to want a little talk. Can we talk in the parking lot? Can we have this disagreement worked out? That is just the way it would be settled, and, maybe, that is the way it should be settled here too. I don't know. I don't think so.

I have met too many wonderful people with whom I have been serving for the last 7 years who are bright, extremely capable, intelligent, and with a wealth of experience, and I would put them up against any people whom I have met anywhere in any occupation in the country. But for some reason, we are all blocked from doing the right thing or what we know is right—sitting down and not accusing each other, not working and conspiring against each other, and not getting basically to the point that it is so visceral. Perhaps, someone might be talking with me one day, but, then, that weekend they might be in my State campaigning against me. Then, we come back on Monday or Tuesday, and we are supposed to sit down and work through our problems and differences for the betterment of our country. I just think human nature doesn't let that happen, and it will not produce good results.

I have always looked forward to working with everybody. I am probably one of the most centrist, as far as being on more pieces of legislation in a bipartisan way. I have never looked at a Republican or a Democratic problem. I just looked at a problem that we had,