

make sure those families are not hurt. The second thing is, we want to actually get to appropriations, not continuing resolutions.

When do you a continuing resolution for any length of time, like what we are in right now—we are in our eighth week of a continuing resolution right now. When you do one that long, it hurts temporary workers who are Federal workers. They are laid off in the process. Other folks are not. Many of these agencies need those temporary workers, and those temporary workers are counting on that salary. It hurts contracting because everything can't start in a continuing resolution. You have to wait until there are real appropriations before new programs can start. You can't stop old programs. You can't do purchasing. It creates a tremendous inefficiency in government.

Our simple idea was this: Let's find a way to protect Federal workers and get to appropriations. The solution we came up with is pretty straightforward. When we get to the end of the fiscal year, which right now is October 1, if appropriations are not done, there will be a continuing resolution that kicks into effect to protect Federal workers, but Members of Congress and our staff and the White House Office of Management and Budget—none of us can travel. Members of Congress will be in continuous session 7 days a week until we get appropriations done. And one more thing: We can't move to any issues other than appropriations. We are locked into that box.

Basically, if our work is not done, we all will have to stay until the work is done. I have had folks say that is not really a big consequence. A lot of folks do that all over the country all the time. If at the end of their workday their work is not done, they have to stay until they get it done. Small business owners know that full well. It is not like you can punch a clock. If the work is not done in a small business, you stay until it actually gets done.

Here is the thing. Go back to last December. When the shutdown started last December and we got to an impasse here between the House, the Senate, and the White House, Members of Congress and our staff all left and went home. Federal workers across the country all took a big, deep breath as they walked into the holidays because they were on furlough, but Members of this body walked out. That should never happen—never.

What Senator HASSAN and I are proposing is very simple. The pressure shouldn't be on Federal workers. They can't vote to solve this. The pressure should be on us.

For everyone in this body who says, "I don't like that kind of artificial pressure," why don't you feel what it is like to be a Federal worker for a while and those Federal employees? They don't like that pressure on them. So let's flip it. Let's put the pressure on us, where it should be, and get it off the folks, where it should not be, and let's stay until we get our work done.

This idea is overly simplistic, but what is interesting is, for the first time in a decade, there is an idea that has bipartisan support. We have multiple Members of this body who are looking at it, contemplating it, and then nodding their heads, saying: I would rather the pressure be on us than on the Federal workers and their families.

Let's solve this. We shouldn't have government shutdowns. We should have arguments over debt and deficit. We should have arguments over the budget. That is why people sent us here—to solve how their money is going to be spent most efficiently and argue about issues on debt and deficit.

In the meantime, why in the world would we want to hurt the very people who serve their neighbors, those people being the Federal employees around the country? Let's keep them out of it. Let's keep them still serving their neighbors, and let's keep the fight right here where it needs to be. Let's argue this out until we get it resolved, and let's not quit until we resolve it. It is a simple idea that Senator HASSAN and I actually believe will work.

In the decades to come, people will look back at the time when we used to have government shutdowns and will shake their heads and say: I can't believe there was a period of time during which the Federal government used to shut down when they argued. Now we stay until we get the issue settled.

It is a pretty straightforward idea, and I hope that more of my colleagues will join us in this absolute commitment to solving this for future generations.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

REMEMBERING KAY HAGAN

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, I want to spend a few minutes recognizing our late colleague and my friend Senator Kay Hagan.

Kay and I both came to the Senate in 2009. I had the privilege of working with her on two committees—HELP and Banking. As a former vice president of the North Carolina National Bank, she had a lot more to offer to that committee than I had, and I tried to learn from her whenever I could. Kay and I both came to the Senate in the middle of the worst recession since the Great Depression. We were losing 700,000 jobs a month, and millions were losing their homes. It was an incredibly difficult moment for the country, but it brought out all of Kay's best qualities.

Everyone knew that Kay faced some of the toughest politics of any Member of our caucus, but in those early days, I saw her take vote after vote on some

of the hardest issues. She never wavered. She voted for the Recovery Act to save the economy when we were in free fall. She voted for Dodd-Frank to restore confidence and accountability to the financial sector, which was something she knew quite a lot about. She spoke out against amendment No. 1 in North Carolina and for marriage equality. She also cast a decisive vote for the Affordable Care Act.

As a Democratic Senator from North Carolina and as a freshman Senator, none of those positions were easy to take, but she knew they were the right places to be for her State and for the country. Because Kay did what she did, millions of Americans kept jobs they would have lost, and millions of Americans gained quality, affordable health insurance for the first time in their lives. In her home State, the LGBT community had a Senator in Washington who, for the first time in history, was willing to fight for their full and equal rights.

One of our colleagues, the senior Senator from Tennessee, likes to say: If you have come to Washington just to hear yourself talk, just stay home and get a job on the radio. It is not worth the trouble of your coming all the way here.

Kay didn't come to Washington to talk. She came to work and to lead.

Over her term, Kay was a fierce and principled advocate for North Carolina. As a member of the Committee on Armed Services, she helped to prevent cuts to tuition programs for veterans. She sponsored the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act to help close the gender pay gap across the country. She worked across the aisle to promote conservation and outdoor recreation, which is something we appreciate in my home State of Colorado.

She was a lot less interested in the empty politics of this town and a lot more interested in making progress for the people of North Carolina and for our country. She was a voice of reason, pragmatism, and humility in this body, which sorely lacks all three. In other words, Kay took her job seriously but never herself, and no matter how difficult it might have been, she never failed to put the people of North Carolina ahead of the politics of the moment. It is why she earned deep respect from both sides of the aisle, not only for her work ethic but for her kindness, her warmth, and her grace. There was not a room in this complex, including the one I am standing in right now, that wasn't brightened the moment that Kay Hagan walked in.

To Chip, her husband, and to their kids—Jeanette, Tilden, and Carrie—I hope you know how proud we all are of Kay. She represented the best qualities of North Carolina. It is why her colleagues adored her. It is why her staff loved her and revered her, and it is why all of us who had the privilege of working with her in this body will miss her terribly.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

SATELLITE TELEVISION EXTENSION AND LOCALISM ACT REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I rise this afternoon because there is a legislative deadline in front of this body that we dare not miss. Even as I speak, our colleagues in the House Energy and Commerce Committee are considering the Satellite Television Extension and Localism Act Reauthorization, or STELAR. For 30 years, STELAR and previous versions of the law have allowed people who live beyond the reach of a broadcast signal to receive broadcast programming nonetheless.

Some Senators believe that in 2019, STELAR has outlived its usefulness and want it to expire, but other Senators want to extend some of these provisions—at least in the short term—to prevent consumers from losing these broadcast signals; still others want to use the STELAR reauthorization legislation as a vehicle to implement other reforms.

I have introduced new legislation, the Satellite Television Access Reauthorization—or STAR—Act to move this process forward. The existing STELAR statute expires December 31. So absent congressional action before the end of the year, the provisions included in STELAR that enable nearly 870,000 Americans to access broadcasting TV signals will no longer be the law of the land. These Americans who depend on STELAR are mostly in rural parts of this country, like my home State of Mississippi. They include truckers, tailgaters, and RV drivers, and they include Americans living in very remote areas.

I say to my colleagues, now is the time for Senators to make their positions clear. Over the course of this year, I have been polling Members to ascertain what this body wants. As chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, I will act according to the majority wishes, but time is running short. Many people point to the fact that the media landscape is changing. There are more options for video content than ever before. New programming is coming out every day that is being streamed through new services. Those are all great things.

As I said at a June Commerce Committee hearing, we are living in the golden age of television. The Commerce Committee has been working to close the digital divide between rural and urban America to make sure all families can access those choices and all families can be a part of the golden age, but there are still Americans without Internet access and without broad-

cast signals. They deserve the ability to view basic television services just like everyone else.

Without the reauthorization of STELAR, many Americans will not be able to watch broadcast news or enjoy access to programming that is available for the rest of the country. They will be on the wrong side of the digital divide, and there will be a wide cultural divide, as they would be cut off from the flow of programs and information.

If Members of this body are of a mind to move forward with some extension of this statute, we will work with our colleagues in the House. That may include improvements and enhancements to STELAR that address good faith requirements, level the playing field in the marketplace, promote access to programming, and ensure robust competition, but we don't have much time.

After this week, Senators will go home for Thanksgiving. Many of those across the country who benefit from STELAR in our States will watch football games and the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, thanks to the STELAR law. They will enjoy time with their families, and I look forward to doing the same, but when Congress returns, there will be just 2 weeks—10 legislative days—to finalize any legislation and send it to the President for his signature.

In this body, taking no action is easy. It comes naturally. But in this case, no action equals the repeal of the STELAR law in its entirety, and Members should know that. They have 10 days to ensure 870,000 Americans will be able to watch the same programs next year that they are seeing this year, or we can let STELAR expire and take the risk of letting the chips fall where they may.

To repeat, my colleagues should be advised they need to make a voice that is heard on whether the STELAR legislation needs to be extended or expire.

Thank you, Madam President.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 2486

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise today to urge immediate passage of the bipartisan FUTURE Act, which is H.R. 2486, to restore critical funding for historically Black colleges and universities, known by the acronym here in Washington as HBCUs, as well as minority-serving institutions, so-called MSIs.

The \$255 million in funding that HBCUs and MSIs rely on lapsed on September 30 of this year. Both the historically Black colleges and univer-

sities and the minority-serving institutions are underresourced and don't have the flexibility to operate in the red in the hopes of potential reimbursement later on.

Campuses are already feeling this impact. Just 2 weeks after this program expired, some campuses notified employees that their positions and programs may be terminated. We are talking about real people losing their jobs and programs being cut that play a critical role in graduating and retaining students in the STEM field—science, technology, engineering, and math fields. All of this is impacting students across the country. Presidents of some of these institutions have told us that planning has "all but stopped." This funding lapse is urgent, and it must be addressed now.

From the perspective of my home State of Pennsylvania, we have two of the oldest historically Black colleges and universities—two of the oldest in the whole country—Cheyney University, as well as Lincoln University, and, in addition to that, a growing Hispanic-serving institution, in this case, the Reading Area Community College.

We know that the investment made by the FUTURE Act will support college completion and academic opportunities at these and all historically Black colleges and universities and minority-serving institutions across the country. The FUTURE Act is fully paid for. It would not add to the deficit. It has strong bipartisan support in both Chambers.

My colleagues in the majority are holding this funding hostage in an effort to pass what I would argue is a partisan bill. That is not just my argument or my opinion; some of my Republican colleagues have said this is the reason they are holding up this critical legislation.

Instead of passing a bipartisan comprehensive reauthorization of our future higher education law, which my colleague Senator MURRAY is pushing for, some Republicans want to force Democrats to support a partisan bill.

Instead of working in a bipartisan fashion to fix our current system so it works better for students, families, and teachers, they want us to support a so-called micropackage, the Student Aid Improvement Act. This act, in my judgment and the judgment of others, fails to address a number of critical areas, including improved campus safety and access to higher education affordability and accountability. Because of that, it maintains the status quo.

Make no mistake, the Student Aid Improvement Act is a partisan bill. The bill fails to address the challenges students are facing in obtaining a college degree—including childcare, housing, food and mental health, among others—nor does it address the needs of first-generation students, students of color, and students with disabilities.