

actions that they are contemplating and making a terrible mistake, but also that we would send a strong message to the people of Ukraine to give them strength during this time, and, finally, a message to the global community that the lamp of freedom will not be extinguished.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. REED. Mr. President, we are 4 months into the fiscal year, and our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have still not agreed to a deal to fund the Federal Government, including the Department of Defense. In a matter of days, we will face the prospect of a long-term continuing resolution or government shutdown if an agreement on overall funding levels cannot be reached.

From the moment President Biden submitted his budget request, Republican leaders said his proposed \$12.6 billion increase for defense was not enough. So, on a bipartisan basis, we worked to raise that number to a level proposed by the ranking member of the Armed Services Committee and supported by every Republican on the committee as well as the 88 Senators who voted for the final National Defense Authorization Act.

But even with that defense number in hand, our Republican colleagues continue to draw out negotiations on a top-line funding number for the Federal Government. In doing so, they risk pushing us into a full-year continuing resolution that would fund defense at a level that is less than President Biden's initial request.

Let me say that again. They were deeply critical of the President's proposal. They worked and we worked with them to get a robust increase in defense spending, and now they are prepared to accept a number even below President Biden's request.

Make no mistake, a full-year CR will short-change our military, and it will disrupt the efficient operations of the Federal Government in the midst of international tension, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and a fragile economic recovery.

As my colleague from Ohio just pointed out, we are in a serious confrontation on the Ukrainian border between Russian forces and Ukrainian forces. And we have indicated that we want to help. A big part of that help would come from the Department of Defense, but it would be very difficult with a continuing resolution to marshal the help and support to our colleagues and our friends in Ukraine.

As I noted, the outlines of a reasonable agreement for both defense and nondefense funding have been evident for some time. Indeed, the National Defense Authorization Act, which passed on a bipartisan basis in December, set a funding level for defense that is 5 percent higher than last year's enacted level. It reflects the level proposed by

Ranking Member INHOFE. And, as chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I fully supported that funding level and cosponsored Senator INHOFE's amendment to authorize the increase.

For his part, Senator LEAHY has adopted the NDAA defense funding levels in the bills that the Appropriations Committee introduced in November. He accommodated that increase by reducing funding for domestic programs by \$22.5 billion from the level in the administration's request.

So Democrats have agreed to increase defense funding and to reduce nondefense funding from the levels requested by the President. In doing so, Democrats proposed a budget that funds defense activities at a level that is higher than nondefense activities.

Let me underscore that point, because GOP leaders often say there should be parity between defense and nondefense spending. Senate Democrats have proposed spending bills that have \$777.5 billion for defense and \$753 billion for every other discretionary program—the VA, education, agriculture, FBI, Department of Homeland Security, and so on. Democrats have offered our Republican colleagues nearly everything they have asked for, but they won't take yes for an answer.

As we drift toward the full-year CR, our colleagues on the other side of the aisle are reacting with nonchalance to the impacts on defense.

Let me remind my colleagues what a full-year CR will mean for national defense. It will mean that defense spending would be about \$37 billion lower than the levels set out in the NDAA and lower than the funding levels requested by President Biden—yes, those levels they criticized so aggressively that President Biden suggests. If they pursue this path of a CR, the numbers for defense will be less than the President's initial request.

It means military personnel accounts will be funded \$5 billion below what the Department requested. A CR means DOD will have to cannibalize other accounts in order to provide the pay raise and other benefit increases that our servicemembers rightfully deserve.

It means the Pentagon may have to delay or suspend permanent change-of-station moves and accession of troops—again, all of this in the context, as my colleague from Ohio pointed out, of a major crisis in Europe and a growing concern about Chinese activities in the Pacific.

It means training and readiness accounts will fall about \$5.3 billion short of what the Department requested. And the key to the morale of soldiers—among one of the most important keys—is that they are well trained and they are prepared. We owe it to them to give them that training and ensure they are prepared.

It means the military healthcare account will be short over \$1 billion.

A CR also means that we will be tied to funding priorities from a year ago,

even though circumstances have changed markedly. For example, our military engagements with Afghanistan and Eastern Europe are vastly different from last year. Funding will be trapped in the wrong accounts and the Defense Department will not have the flexibility to move it where it is needed.

A CR will prevent the Defense Department from effectively modernizing and reinvesting in new programs. Because new program starts are not allowed under a CR, the Department of Defense will be forced into funding legacy systems that are outdated and inefficient. Meanwhile, important new initiatives and acquisitions would be delayed.

We won't be able to fund three additional ships and seven more Joint Strike Fighters in the Navy's 2022 budget. The Marines would have to delay procurement of the MQ-9A Reaper UAV, and the Amphibious Combat Vehicle.

The Space Force would have to cut two of the five planned national security space launch missions, and the Air Force would have to delay the Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent Program and the long-range standoff weapon.

DOD also won't be able to start over 100 military construction projects—new facilities that our servicemembers need to do their jobs safely and effectively. This includes, among others: \$32 million in Air Force corrosion and simulator projects in Florida, \$55 million for a joint operation center at Fort Polk in Louisiana, \$56 million in total projects for Wisconsin, \$75 million in total projects for Georgia, \$94 million in total projects for Michigan, \$161 million in total projects for Texas, \$186 million in total projects for California, \$251 million for a runway extension at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Alaska, \$251 million in total projects for South Dakota, and \$321 million in total projects for North Carolina.

Finally, a CR will disrupt DOD's partnerships with outside partners in the private sector and academia, and with our allies, because they inject uncertainty, instability, and additional costs to R&D and acquisition processes.

In short, a yearlong CR will make us less competitive with our adversaries and less able to respond to the rapidly changing global landscape, which was illustrated so eloquently by my colleague from Ohio. It would be a self-inflicted wound at a dangerous time for the country and our international partners.

The impact will not only be felt on the defense side of the ledger. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to produce new and potentially dangerous strains, we risk losing \$5 billion in research at the NIH and \$2.4 billion in funding for our public health infrastructure, including funding for the CDC, BARDA, and the National Disaster Medical System.

And a CR would sacrifice \$3 billion in new investments in mental health, and

one of the obvious outcomes of this pandemic is the mental health challenge that is facing all Americans, and particularly young Americans.

We risk losing a proposed \$400 increase in the maximum Pell grant, just as schools and students are trying to finalize financial aid packages. Too many students have put off their college education due to economic hardship and uncertainty during the pandemic. This Congress should not make matters worse by withholding student aid.

A CR would also be a slap in the face to the Capitol Police, who have been stretched to the limit in the aftermath of the January 6 assault on the Capitol. It would deny the department needed funding to hire new officers, for overtime and retention payments, as well as resources for officer wellness and mental health support.

Chairman LEAHY has bent over backward to engage our Republican colleagues. Four months into the fiscal year, we need them to reach an agreement. Otherwise, we risk a full-year CR in which everybody loses—most of all the American people.

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

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

The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. First of all, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak for up to 7 minutes and Senator BARRASSO be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes prior to the scheduled rollcall votes.

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

(The remarks of Mr. MORAN pertaining to the introduction of S. 3541 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. MORAN. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, first, I would like to commend my colleague, the senior Senator from Kansas, for his incredible ongoing leadership on the issue of the veterans of our Nation and his strong commitment to each and every one of those veterans and to the men and women who wear the uniform and go to battle to keep us safe and keep us free, and it is his long history of leadership for which I am most grateful.

ENERGY

Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about a different issue, and that is the need for more American energy.

Right now, the American people are facing the worst inflation in 40 years. In November, we saw the biggest price

increases from an energy standpoint in 10 years. CNBC reports that one in five American families could not afford to pay an energy bill this past year. Roughly the same number of Americans have kept their homes at an unhealthy temperature because they can't afford the cost of energy to heat it.

Gas prices have gone up by roughly \$1 a gallon since Joe Biden took office. This is the fastest increase in gas prices in 40 years. The price of gas affects the price of everything else. It is increasingly expensive in this country to transport goods from the farm and from the factory to the people who need the products. As a result, the American people aren't just paying more at the pump; they are also paying more at the grocery store.

So why are energy prices rising so quickly? Well, demand is up and supply is down. It is basic economics.

Under Joe Biden, American energy production still hasn't recovered in this country to the levels that we were producing energy prior to the pandemic. Why would that be? Because this is a direct result of the anti-American energy policies of this White House.

On his first day in office, Joe Biden killed the Keystone XL Pipeline. He blocked new oil and gas leases on public lands all across the country. He stopped the exploration for energy in the Arctic. He tried to ban exploration for energy off our coasts. He has threatened to raise taxes on American energy. So what happened? Well, as a result of this radical, anti-American, Biden energy agenda, we are failing to produce enough energy in this country, and people who have the capacity and ability to do it and have worked those jobs for a long time are having a hard time keeping a job.

America is now producing 1.4 million fewer barrels of oil each and every day than we were prior to the pandemic. We are now using more oil from Russia than we are from Alaska. This is specifically the result of the Biden policies.

Joe Biden is attacking American energy. He is turning into a great salesman for Russian energy. I mean, why is it that right now, we are importing twice as much—twice as much—crude oil from Russia as we did a year ago? It is because of Joe Biden. Joe Biden has even had his National Security Advisor plead with Russia to produce more oil to sell to the United States.

I know the Presiding Officer may find that very hard to believe, but all you have to do is go to the White House's website and read the sad fact.

Just months after he killed the Keystone Pipeline, Joe Biden gave a big stamp of approval to Vladimir Putin—to Putin—for his pipeline, the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline. He killed the American pipeline and approved the Russian pipeline. Joe Biden's energy policy is, pipelines for Putin and no pipeline for the American people, and the American

people have been paying the price as a result. It seems that Joe Biden would rather have us buy energy from our enemies than have us produce the energy in our country and sell it to our friends.

So, as a result of the Biden policies, Vladimir Putin has hit the energy financial jackpot. For decades, Putin has used energy as a geopolitical weapon. How does he use it? He uses it to coerce and intimidate, and that includes our allies. We saw this in November when Putin shut off the flow of natural gas to Moldova. By giving Vladimir Putin Nord Stream 2, President Biden gave Putin a new geopolitical weapon, and now Putin is emboldened, and he is flush with cash.

Right now, today, Vladimir Putin is preparing to do something he has wanted to do for years. He has amassed over 100,000 troops on the border with Ukraine. With the Winter Olympics about to begin in China, Russia is expected to invade Ukraine. If Russia invades, this will only worsen the energy crisis in that part of the world but also here as well.

Vladimir Putin is cunning, he is opportunistic, and he is aggressive. When he sees an opportunity, he takes it. Putin can smell weakness, and he views our President, Joe Biden, as weak and ineffective.

The sledgehammer we have against Putin is to shut down the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline and to do it permanently. Last month, this body had an opportunity to do just that. Yet Senate Democrats filibustered the bill. The same Democrats who voted to get rid of the filibuster on the floor of the Senate used the filibuster to shut down a bill that many of them have supported for years. This is hypocrisy at its worst.

Democrats, last week, based on lobbying from the White House, refused to sanction Putin's pipeline. The Nord Stream 2 Pipeline is going to lead to an enormous transfer of wealth from our allies to our enemies. It is going to make our allies weaker, and it is going to make Vladimir Putin that much stronger. When Putin gets stronger and wealthier, what does he do? Well, he tends to become more aggressive. It is not just a threat to Europe; it is a threat to the whole world.

So I have introduced legislation called the ESCAPE Act. My bill imposes mandatory sanctions on Russian pipeline projects, and it expedites the sales of American natural gas to our NATO allies.

We have the ability to produce massive amounts of more energy in the United States than Joe Biden and the Democrats are allowing our country to produce, and, of course, the Democrats are killing jobs and hurting paychecks in the process.

It is incumbent upon us to give our allies an opportunity to have energy and not be beholden to Vladimir Putin's supply. We need to produce it here. We have it here. We should be producing it here.