

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I have very good news for my colleagues and for the country. Democrats and Republicans have just reached an agreement that will allow us to pass the CR tonight before the midnight deadline.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from Kentucky.

AMENDMENT NO. 3346

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I call up my amendment, No. 3346, and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. PAUL] proposes an amendment numbered 3346.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To adjust the normal and early retirement ages for Social Security benefits and increase the maximum age for delayed retirement credits)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ ADJUSTMENT TO NORMAL AND EARLY RETIREMENT AGE.

Section 216(l) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 416(l)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (D), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

“(F) with respect to an individual who—

“(i) attains 62 years of age after December 31, 2024, and before January 1, 2032, such individual’s early retirement age (as determined under paragraph (2)(A)(ii)) plus 60 months; or

“(ii) receives a benefit described in paragraph (2)(B) and attains 60 years of age after December 31, 2024, and before January 1, 2032, 67 years plus the number of months in the age increase factor (as determined under paragraph (5)(A)) for the calendar year in which such individual attains 60 years of age;

“(G) with respect to an individual who—

“(i) attains 62 years of age after December 31, 2031, and before January 1, 2033, 69 years of age; or

“(ii) receives a benefit described in paragraph (2)(B) and attains 60 years of age after December 31, 2031, and before January 1, 2033, 69 years of age;

“(H) with respect to an individual who—

“(i) attains 62 years of age after December 31, 2032, and before January 1, 2036, 67 years of age plus the number of months in the age increase factor (as determined under paragraph (5)(B)); or

“(ii) receives a benefit described in paragraph (2)(B) and attains 60 years of age after December 31, 2032, and before January 1, 2036,

67 years of age plus the number of months in the age increase factor (as determined under paragraph (5)(A));

“(I) with respect to an individual who—

“(i) attains 62 years of age after December 31, 2035, and before January 1, 2037, 70 years of age; or

“(ii) receives a benefit described in paragraph (2)(B) and attains 60 years of age after December 31, 2035, and before January 1, 2037, 70 years of age; and

“(J) with respect to an individual who—

“(i) attains 62 years of age after December 31, 2036, 70 years of age plus the number of months in the age increase factor (as determined under paragraph (6)); or

“(ii) receives a benefit described in paragraph (2)(B) and attains 60 years of age after December 31, 2036, 70 years of age plus the number of months in the age increase factor (as determined under paragraph (6)).”;

(2) by amending paragraph (2) to read as follows:

“(2) The term ‘early retirement age’ means—

“(A) in the case of an old-age, wife’s, or husband’s insurance benefit—

“(i) 62 years of age with respect to an individual who attains such age before January 1, 2025;

“(ii) with respect to an individual who attains 62 years of age after December 31, 2024, and before January 1, 2032, 62 years of age plus the number of months in the age increase factor (as determined under paragraph (4)) for the calendar year in which such individual attains 62 years of age; and

“(iii) with respect to an individual who attains age 62 after December 31, 2031, 64 years of age; or

“(B) in the case of a widow’s or widower’s insurance benefit, 60 years of age.”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(4) For purposes of paragraph (2)(A)(ii), the age increase factor shall be equal to three-twelfths of the number of months in the period beginning with January 2025 and ending with December of the year in which the individual attains 62 years of age.

“(5) The age increase factor shall be equal to three-twelfths of the number of months in the period beginning with January 2025 and ending with December of the year in which—

“(A) for purposes of paragraphs (1)(F)(ii) and (1)(H)(ii), the individual attains 60 years of age; or

“(B) for purposes of paragraph (1)(H)(i), the individual attains 62 years of age.

“(6) The Commissioner of Social Security shall determine (using reasonable actuarial assumptions) and publish on or before November 1 of each calendar year after 2035 the number of months (rounded, if not a multiple of one month, to the next lower multiple of one month) by which life expectancy as of October 1 of such calendar year of an individual attaining early retirement age on such October 1 exceeds the life expectancy as of October 1, 2036, of an individual attaining early retirement age on October 1, 2036. With respect to an individual who attains early retirement in the calendar year following any calendar year in which a determination is made under this paragraph, the age increase factor shall be the number of months determined under this paragraph as of October 1 of such calendar year in which such determination is made.”.

SEC. ____ INCREASE IN MAXIMUM AGE FOR DELAYED RETIREMENT CREDIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (w) of section 202 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 402) is amended—

(1) in paragraphs (2)(A) and (3), by striking “age 70” each place it appears and inserting “the maximum delayed retirement age (as determined pursuant to paragraph (7))”;

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(7) For purposes of paragraphs (2)(A) and (3), the ‘maximum delayed retirement age’ shall be equal to—

“(A) during the period before January 1, 2025, 70 years of age for an individual who has attained early retirement age (as determined under section 216(l)(2)) during such period; and

“(B) during the period after December 31, 2024, the sum of—

“(i) the retirement age for such calendar year, as determined under section 216(l)(1), for an individual who has attained age 62 (for purposes of section 216(l)(2)(A)) or who has attained age 60 (for purposes of section 216(l)(2)(B)) during such calendar year; and

“(ii) 3 years.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on January 1, 2025.

Mr. PAUL. I yield back all time on the amendment.

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

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 3346

The question now occurs on the adoption of amendment No. 3346.

Mr. PAUL. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from California (Mr. SCHIFF) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The result was announced—yeas 3, nays 93, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 333 Leg.]

YEAS—3

Lee	Lummis	Paul
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NAYS—93

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Peters
Barrasso	Graham	Reed
Bennet	Grassley	Ricketts
Blackburn	Hagerty	Risch
Blumenthal	Hassan	Romney
Booker	Hawley	Rosen
Boozman	Heinrich	Rounds
Braun	Hickenlooper	Sanders
Britt	Hirono	Schatz
Brown	Hoeben	Schmitt
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Schumer
Cantwell	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Capito	Kaine	Scott (SC)
Cardin	Kelly	Shaheen
Carper	Kennedy	Sinema
Casey	Kim	Smith
Cassidy	King	Stabenow
Collins	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Coons	Lankford	Tester
Cornyn	Lujan	Thune
Cortez Masto	Markey	Tillis
Cotton	Marshall	Tuberville
Cramer	McConnell	Van Hollen
Crapo	Merkley	Warner
Cruz	Moran	Warnock
Daines	Mullin	Warren
Duckworth	Murkowski	Welch
Durbin	Murphy	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murray	Wicker
Fetterman	Ossoff	Wyden
Fischer	Padilla	Young

NOT VOTING—4

Manchin Schiff
Rubio Vance

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 3, the nays are 93.

The 60-vote threshold having not been achieved, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 3346) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Came close. Came close.

Mr. President and my colleagues, we want to finish at a reasonable hour. If we want to finish as quickly as possible, I would urge Members to stay in their seats and answer to your name when it is called. That will speed things up. Thank you. And we are going to have a 10-minute limit on votes, period.

(Applause.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

AMENDMENT NO. 3352

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 3352 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. PAUL] proposes an amendment numbered 3352.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide for automatic continuing resolutions)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . AUTOMATIC CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 13 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1310 the following new section:

“§ 1311. Continuing appropriations

“(a)(1) On and after the first day of each fiscal year, if an appropriation Act for such fiscal year with respect to the account for a program, project, or activity has not been enacted and continuing appropriations are not in effect with respect to the program, project, or activity, there are appropriated, at the rate for operations specified in paragraph (2), such sums as may be necessary to continue the program, project, or activity if funds were provided for the program, project, or activity during the preceding fiscal year—

“(A) in the corresponding appropriation Act for such preceding fiscal year; or

“(B) if the corresponding appropriation bill for such preceding fiscal year did not become law, in a law making continuing appropriations for such preceding fiscal year.

“(2)(A) Appropriations and funds made available, and authority granted, for a program, project, or activity for any fiscal year pursuant to this section shall be at a rate of operations not in excess of the lower of—

“(i) 94 percent of the rate of operations provided for in the regular appropriation Act providing for such program, project, or activity for the preceding fiscal year;

“(ii) in the absence of such an Act, 94 percent of the rate of operations provided for such program, project, or activity pursuant to a law making continuing appropriations for such preceding fiscal year; or

“(iii) 94 percent of the annualized rate of operations provided for in the most recently

enacted law making continuing appropriations for part of that fiscal year or any funding levels established under the provisions of this section,

for the period of 90 days. After the first 90-day period during which this subsection is in effect for that fiscal year, the applicable rate of operations shall be reduced by 1 percentage point. For each subsequent 90-day period during which this subsection is in effect for that fiscal year, the applicable rate of operations shall be reduced by 1 percentage point. The 90-day period reductions shall extend beyond the last day of that fiscal year.

“(B) If this section is in effect at the end of a fiscal year, funding levels shall continue as provided in this section for the next fiscal year.

“(3) Appropriations and funds made available, and authority granted, for any fiscal year pursuant to this section for a program, project, or activity shall be available for the period beginning with the first day of a lapse in appropriations and ending with the date on which the applicable regular appropriation bill for such fiscal year becomes law (whether or not such law provides for such program, project, or activity) or a continuing resolution making appropriations becomes law, as the case may be.

“(b) An appropriation or funds made available, or authority granted, for a program, project, or activity for any fiscal year pursuant to this section shall be subject to the terms and conditions imposed with respect to the appropriation made or funds made available for the preceding fiscal year, or authority granted for such program, project, or activity under current law.

“(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, for those programs, projects, or activities that would otherwise have high initial rates of operation or complete distribution of appropriations at the beginning of a fiscal year for which funding is made available under this section because of distributions of funding to States, foreign countries, grantees, or others, such high initial rates of operation or complete distribution shall not be made, and no grants shall be awarded for such programs, projects, or activities funded by this section that would impinge on final funding prerogatives.

“(d) Expenditures made for a program, project, or activity for any fiscal year pursuant to this section shall be charged to the applicable appropriation, fund, or authorization whenever a regular appropriation bill or a measure making continuing appropriations until the end of a fiscal year providing for such program, project, or activity for such period becomes law.

“(e) This section shall not apply to a program, project, or activity during a fiscal year if any other provision of law (other than an authorization of appropriations)—

“(1) makes an appropriation, makes funds available, or grants authority for such program, project, or activity to continue for such period; or

“(2) specifically provides that no appropriation shall be made, no funds shall be made available, or no authority shall be granted for such program, project, or activity to continue for such period.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections of chapter 13 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1310 the following new item:

“1311. Continuing appropriations.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be up to 2 minutes for debate, equally divided.

Mr. PAUL. I yield back.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 3352

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there any debate?

Hearing none, the question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. PAUL. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN), and the Senator from California (Mr. SCHIFF) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The result was announced—yeas 28, nays 67, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 334 Leg.]

YEAS—28

Barrasso	Graham	Paul
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Braun	Hagerty	Romney
Budd	Hoeben	Schmitt
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cramer	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Crapo	Lee	Thune
Cruz	Lummis	Tuberville
Daines	Marshall	
Ernst	Moran	

NAYS—67

Baldwin	Heinrich	Rosen
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Rounds
Blumenthal	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Boozman	Kaine	Schumer
Britt	Kelly	Shaheen
Brown	Kennedy	Sinema
Cantwell	Kim	Smith
Capito	King	Stabenow
Cardin	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Carper	Lujan	Tester
Casey	Markey	Tillis
Collins	McConnell	Van Hollen
Coons	Merkley	Warner
Cornyn	Mullin	Warnock
Cotton	Murkowski	Warren
Duckworth	Murphy	Welch
Durbin	Murray	Whitehouse
Fetterman	Ossoff	Wicker
Fischer	Padilla	Wyden
Gillibrand	Peters	Young
Hassan	Reed	
Hawley	Ricketts	

NOT VOTING—5

Cortez Masto	Rubio	Vance
Manchin	Schiff	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 28, the nays are 67.

The 60-vote threshold having not been achieved, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 3352) was rejected.

Mr. SCHUMER. Please, Members, stay in your seats. Let's get this done quick.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). The Senator from Texas.

AMENDMENT NO. 3360

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.)

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 3360 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Texas [Mr. CRUZ] proposes an amendment numbered 3360.

The amendment is as follows:

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD (legislative day of December 16, 2024) under "Text of Amendments.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There are now up to 2 minutes of debate, equally divided.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, everyone is here tonight voting on a provision to treat fairly our retired police officers, firefighters, and teachers. We should do that. The windfall elimination provision treated them unfairly. I have been fighting to correct this since 2017. We can correct this. We can treat our retired cops and firefighters and teachers fairly.

However, the provision on the floor of the Senate tonight would add to the Social Security trust fund \$200 billion in debt. Every Member of this Senate—Republican and Democrat—has promised to our voters we will protect Social Security. The bill on the floor of the Senate tonight would accelerate the insolvency of Social Security by 6 months.

My amendment fixes the inequity of the windfall elimination provision but does so at a cost of only \$25 billion instead of \$200 billion. The amendment on the floor accelerates the insolvency of Social Security; my amendment has a negligible effect on Social Security.

Let me urge everyone: Let's support our cops and firefighters and teachers, but let's also not throw our seniors down the river. I urge you to vote yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, just very briefly, the House rejected the Cruz proposal by a wide margin. Voting for this amendment, sending it back to the House right before the 118th Congress adjourns is, in effect, a vote to kill the bill. I would urge the body to reject this Hail Mary attempt to kill the bill.

I yield back.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 3360

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on adoption of the amendment.

Mr. CRUZ. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from California (Mr. SCHIFF) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The result was announced—yeas 32, nays 64, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 335 Leg.]

YEAS—32

Table listing names of Senators who voted 'YEAS' (32 total): Barrasso, Blackburn, Britt, Budd, Cornyn, Cramer, Crapo, Cruz, Daines, Ernst, Graham, Grassley, Hagerty, Hoeven, Hyde-Smith, Johnson, Lee, Lummis, Marshall, McConnell, Paul, Risch, Romney, Rounds, Schmitt, Scott (FL), Scott (SC), Thune, Tillis, Tuberville, Wicker, Young.

NAYS—64

Table listing names of Senators who voted 'NAYS' (64 total): Baldwin, Bennet, Blumenthal, Booker, Boozman, Braun, Brown, Cantwell, Capito, Cardin, Carper, Casey, Cassidy, Collins, Coons, Cortez Masto, Cotton, Duckworth, Durbin, Fetterman, Fischer, Gillibrand, Hassan, Hawley, Heinrich, Hickenlooper, Hirono, Kaine, Kelly, Kennedy, Kim, King, Klobuchar, Lankford, Luján, Markey, Merkley, Moran, Mullin, Murkowski, Murphy, Murray, Ossoff, Padilla, Peters, Reed, Ricketts, Rosen, Sanders, Schatz, Schumer, Shaheen, Sinema, Smith, Stabenow, Sullivan, Tester, Van Hollen, Warner, Warnock, Warren, Welch, Whitehouse, Wyden.

NOT VOTING—4

Table listing names of Senators who did not vote (4 total): Manchin, Rubio, Schiff, Vance.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). On this vote, the yeas are 32, the nays are 64.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 3360) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Idaho.

AMENDMENT NO. 3331

Mr. CRAPO. Madam President, I call up my amendment No. 3331, and I ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the clerk will report the amendment by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Idaho [Mr. CRAPO] proposes an amendment numbered 3331.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To delay the repeal of the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions until additional changes are made to offset any negative impacts on the actuarial balance of the Social Security Trust Fund)

Strike section 4 and insert the following:

SEC. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by this Act shall take effect on the date on which the condition described in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) is met and shall apply with respect to monthly insurance benefits payable under title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.) for months beginning on or after such date.

(b) REQUIREMENT TO OFFSET GPO AND WEP REPEAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The condition described in this paragraph is that there are enacted into law such changes to the Social Security program under title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.) (or to any other provision of law) as are necessary to fully

offset any negative impacts on the actuarial balance of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust established under such title that would result from the amendments made by this Act.

(2) DETERMINATION THAT CONDITION IS MET.—For purposes of subsection (a), the Board of Trustees of the Trust Funds established under section 201(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401(c)) shall determine the date on which the condition described in paragraph (1) is met.

(c) RECOMPUTATION OF PRIMARY INSURANCE AMOUNTS FOLLOWING REPEAL OF WEP.—Notwithstanding section 215(f) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 415(f)), the Commissioner of Social Security shall adjust primary insurance amounts to the extent necessary to take into account the amendments made by section 3.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 2 minutes for debate, equally divided.

Mr. CRAPO. Madam President, throughout this entire debate, no one has denied that this bill will raise the insolvency of the Social Security trust fund and cost our hard-working Social Security recipients to lose \$200 billion in Social Security benefits when it does go insolvent.

My amendment simply would delay the implementation of the Social Security Fairness Act until changes are made that would offset the bill's negative effects on Social Security's actuarial balance as determined by the Social Security board of trustees.

Let the Finance Committee fix this bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, the public should know that the Senator is raising concerns about the financial impact of this bill while he and other leaders in his party are vowing to use every budget gimmick under the Sun next year to avoid paying for their tax bill.

Second, we have long had a tale of two tax codes in America, where firefighters and teachers pay with every check while the wealthy can avoid taxes. Now we have the tale of two deficits, where deficits don't exist when it benefits the wealthy, but any changes benefiting firefighters have to be paid for.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this amendment.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 3331

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on adoption of the amendment.

Mr. CRAPO. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from California (Mr. SCHIFF) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator

from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The result was announced—yeas 34, nays 62, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 336 Leg.]

YEAS—34

Table listing Senators in support (YEAS) including Barrasso, Blackburn, Britt, Budd, Carper, Cornyn, Cramer, Crapo, Cruz, Daines, Ernst, and Graham.

NAYS—62

Table listing Senators in opposition (NAYS) including Baldwin, Bennet, Blumenthal, Booker, Boozman, Braun, Brown, Cantwell, Capito, Cardin, Casey, Cassidy, Collins, Coons, Cortez Masto, Cotton, Duckworth, Durbin, Fetterman, Fischer, and Gillibrand.

NOT VOTING—4

Table listing Senators who did not vote: Manchin, Rubio, Schiff, and Vance.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 34, the nays are 62.

The 60-vote threshold having not been achieved, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 3331) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. LEE. The economist Milton Friedman once said:

Keep your eye on one thing and one thing only: how much the government is spending, because that is the true tax. . . . If you're not paying for it in the form of explicit taxes, you're paying for it indirectly in the form of inflation or in the form of borrowing.

The Senate is poised to enact another tax on the American people this week—tonight, in fact—a \$200 billion tax that will leave a hole in the Social Security trust fund. This tax will give extra Social Security benefits to just 4 percent of the American workforce at the expense of the other 96 percent of hard-working Americans.

We must be honest with ourselves in acknowledging that this bill is fiscally irresponsible. To make matters worse, it is entirely unnecessary at this moment in time. There is no reason why we have to be pressed to pass it tonight. Congress is up against no particular deadlines, nor is any program at risk of expiring.

Social Security is already on a dangerously unsustainable path. The trust fund is projected to run out of money in the next decade, which would lead to an across-the-board benefit cut. This

bill would accelerate that crisis. To tax the American people to the tune of another \$200 billion is ludicrous by itself, but to do so when there is no immediate need is nefarious.

To that end, the pending measure, H.R. 82, would cause an increase of \$197.81 billion in the level of Social Security deficit relative to the level deemed for budget enforcement.

Therefore, I raise a point of order against this measure under section 311(a)(3) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Rhode Island.

MOTION TO WAIVE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, pursuant to section 904 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and the waiver provisions of applicable budget resolutions, I move to waive all applicable sections of that act and applicable budget points of order for the purposes of the pending measure.

I ask for the yeas and nays, and for the sake of our retired police officers, firefighters, and teachers, I would urge you to provide a lot more yeas than nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from California (Mr. SCHIFF) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 66, nays 30, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 337 Leg.]

YEAS—66

Table listing Senators in support (YEAS) including Baldwin, Bennet, Blumenthal, Booker, Boozman, Braun, Brown, Cantwell, Capito, Cardin, Carper, Casey, Cassidy, Collins, Coons, Cortez Masto, Cotton, Duckworth, Durbin, Fetterman, Fischer, and Gillibrand.

NAYS—30

Table listing Senators in opposition (NAYS) including Barrasso, Blackburn, Britt, Budd, Cornyn, Cramer, Crapo, Cruz, Daines, and Ernst.

NOT VOTING—4

Table listing Senators who did not vote: Manchin, Rubio, Schiff, and Vance.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 66, the nays are 30.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to and the point of order falls.

Under the previous order, the motion to commit and all pending amendments are withdrawn. The bill is considered read a third time.

The amendments were withdrawn.

The bill was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

Mr. TILLIS. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from California (Mr. SCHIFF) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The result was announced—yeas 76, nays 20, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 338 Leg.]

YEAS—76

Table listing Senators in support (YEAS) including Baldwin, Bennet, Blackburn, Blumenthal, Booker, Boozman, Braun, Brown, Cantwell, Capito, Cardin, Carper, Casey, Cassidy, Collins, Coons, Cortez Masto, Cotton, Cramer, Duckworth, Durbin, Fetterman, Fischer, Gillibrand, and Graham.

NAYS—20

Table listing Senators in opposition (NAYS) including Barrasso, Britt, Budd, Crapo, Cruz, Daines, and Ernst.

NOT VOTING—4

Table listing Senators who did not vote: Manchin, Rubio, Schiff, and Vance.

The bill (H.R. 82) passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 76, the nays are 20.

The 60-vote threshold having been achieved, the bill is passed.

The bill (H.R. 82) was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, tonight, the Senate finally corrects a 50-year mistake by passing the Social Security Fairness Act. Millions of retired teachers and firefighters and letter carriers and State and local workers have waited decades for this moment. No longer will public retirees see their hard-earned Social Security benefits robbed from them, thanks to this bill. It is a very good thing that one of the final acts of the 118th Congress is delivering a huge win for working Americans.

I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their outstanding work, particularly Senators BROWN, COLLINS, and CASSIDY, who led the way, and all those who relentlessly, across the country, called their Senators and got this done.

AMERICAN RELIEF ACT OF 2025

Madam President, tonight, the Senate delivers more good news for America. Tonight, the Senate delivers good news for America. There will be no government shutdown right before Christmas.

(Applause.)

This is a good bill. It will keep the government open and funded, and it helps Americans affected by hurricanes and natural disasters. It helps our farmers and avoids harmful cuts. After a chaotic few days in the House, it is good news that the bipartisan approach, in the end, prevailed. It is a good lesson for next year. Both sides have to work together.

By dealing with people who have had trouble with disasters, by helping our farmers, and avoiding harmful cuts, this is a good bill, and I am glad we are passing it.

I thank my Republican colleagues for working with us to move this bill quickly through the Senate. It is a good outcome for America and the American people.

I yield the floor.

AMERICAN RELIEF ACT, 2025

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H.R. 10545, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 10545) making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be up to 30 minutes for debate, equally divided.

The senior Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I will not use 15 minutes, but I do want to just let our colleagues know that I am very pleased that we are on the verge of passing long overdue relief desperately needed by communities that are recovering from disaster, as well as avoiding a damaging shutdown.

The only reason it took so long and this much chaos to get here is that

House Republicans chose chaos and chose to follow the whims of the richest man in the world. Needless to say, that is not how this should work.

But I am glad that at the end of the day, we will avoid a shutdown and get disaster relief out to families and communities that are struggling after being hit by hurricanes and fires and floods and so much more.

I worked hard with Members on both sides of the aisle to finally get this aid across the line and to make sure we did so in a comprehensive way that meets the wide range of critical needs in the country, because it is painfully clear there are so many communities that are still reeling from hurricanes, wildfires, tornadoes, flooding, and more that really do need this support.

So, despite all the unnecessary chaos and delay, I am glad we are finally here, getting this done. This relief will make a critical difference for folks who have lost it all and are simply working to get their feet back underneath them.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in passing this package so we can get this over the line and avoid a needless shutdown as we head into the holidays.

Finally, one last important thing. I want to recognize my colleagues who helped pull this relief package together, especially my vice chair on Appropriations, Senator COLLINS, who has been a critical partner, and our House counterparts, Congresswoman DELAURO and Congressman COLE, who have pushed so hard to get this disaster relief done.

Of course, I want to thank all of our staff, especially Evan Schatz, our staff director, who worked so hard around the clock to pull together not just the disaster relief in this package but so many other critical funding packages and proposals over the last 2 years I have been chair of the Appropriations Committee. The work is never easy, and I am incredibly grateful to our entire team and to all of our colleagues who have been working so hard.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I rise to urge the passage of the American Relief Act. This bill will avert a costly government shutdown. Although it is after 12 midnight, we are going to avert it. It will deliver much needed assistance to individuals, small businesses, and communities working to rebuild and repair in the wake of natural disasters. It provides much needed aid to our farmers across the country, who have been hit by a tidal wave of harmful economic conditions.

I want to thank the many Senators who have contributed to this legislation. In particular, I want to recognize Chair MURRAY for her leadership of the Appropriations Committee during this Congress.

I hope that in the next Congress, we can bring appropriations bills to the Senate floor in a timely fashion to

avoid this kind of end-of-the-year pile-up.

I do urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I, too, want to recognize and thank my outstanding staff for their hard work.

SOCIAL SECURITY FAIRNESS ACT

Finally, Madam President, I do want to say that it is a great accomplishment that tonight the Senate passed the Social Security Fairness Act, which will be sent to the President for his signature. This is long overdue.

I want to share with my colleagues one really important fact, and that is that 83 percent of those who are affected by the government pension offset, which we repealed tonight, are lower income women. So this is a great accomplishment to eliminate these two inequitable, unfair provisions of the Social Security Act. It is going to make a big difference.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, this is the last vote not only of this evening but of the 118th Congress.

We yield back all time.

(Applause.)

VOTE ON H.R. 10545

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

The bill was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam 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 senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from California (Mr. SCHIFF) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The result was announced—yeas 85, nays 11, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 339 Leg.]

YEAS—85

Baldwin	Cramer	King
Barrasso	Cruz	Klobuchar
Bennet	Daines	Lankford
Blackburn	Duckworth	Lujan
Blumenthal	Durbin	Lummis
Booker	Ernst	Markey
Boozman	Fetterman	Marshall
Britt	Fischer	McConnell
Brown	Gillibrand	Merkley
Budd	Graham	Moran
Cantwell	Grassley	Mullin
Capito	Hagerty	Murkowski
Cardin	Hassan	Murphy
Carper	Heinrich	Murray
Casey	Hickenlooper	Ossoff
Cassidy	Hirono	Padilla
Collins	Hoeben	Peters
Coons	Hyde-Smith	Reed
Cornyn	Kaine	Ricketts
Cortez Masto	Kelly	Rosen
Cotton	Kim	Rounds