

to send us over piecemeal pieces of legislation. Well, OK. We feel bad about the veterans—and we all do. I am the biggest veterans advocate in here. We will take care of them now. And, oh gosh, some of our constituents are mad because they have flown out here and the national museums aren't open, so we will open those, and on and on, whatever the cause of the day is. I guarantee that if we began to pass those piecemeal pieces of legislation, my moms and dads in Head Start would be at the end of the line and would never get funded. I am standing up for them today and saying: You are first in line too.

We are all in this together. We need the government open—all of our agencies. Everybody gets a chance and an opportunity in this country. And we are going to stick together and say to Speaker BOEHNER: Pass a clean CR, and then allow this country and this government and the American way of life to function as our forefathers said—by sitting down at a negotiating table and working out our differences. That is what I have asked for as chair of the Budget Committee 18 times now. It is what we need to say we are going to do again but not while our country is shut down, not while my families in Head Start are held hostage, not while our small businesses are held hostage, not while everybody in this country is looking at us, wondering how we ever got to this.

Open the government, and let's be responsible legislators. That is what I came here to do. I certainly know it is what the Presiding Officer came to do. And let's tell the kids in this country who are watching us today that this country can function, we can work as adults, and we have a responsibility to do that—here and abroad.

Madam President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent there be a period of morning business for debate only until 2 p.m., with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and the majority leader will be recognized at 2 p.m.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask the time used in quorum calls during this period of morning business be equally divided between Democrats and Republicans.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, we find ourselves in a very predictable situation, and what is unpredictable is what our response to this situation is going to be. For some time I have talked about the box canyon that we were taking ourselves into, and I think it has now become very apparent to folks on both sides of the aisle that to overturn a central piece of legislation, it takes more than one-third of government to do so. When we have the presiding President over that piece of legislation, it actually takes two-thirds of each of the bodies to make that happen. I think people have realized that. It gives me no joy, but this is something I have obviously talked about for some time. Now we find ourselves in this box canyon.

What was also very predictable was that my friend TOM COBURN, the great Senator from Oklahoma, laid out very clearly on the Senate floor that even if there was a government shutdown, the health care bill would continue. I think what Americans are waking up to and seeing—even though Republicans have strongly opposed the health care bill at every turn—that even with government being shut down, the health care bill is continuing on and people around the country are signing up for what people call ObamaCare. So both of these were very predictable outcomes.

What is now unpredictable is what our response to that is going to be. I am speaking mostly to my friends on this side of the aisle. There has also been a number of people on the other side of the aisle who have spent a great deal of time over the last 2 or 3 years trying to focus on ways to reduce spending in the government and making our country stronger in the process.

I think to a person over here—as well as many on the other side of the aisle—we understand that our inability to

deal with the fiscal situation in which we find ourselves in this country has hurt us economically. People have not been willing to invest in capital investments within their companies and around the world in many cases because they don't know what is going to happen in our country.

I know first hand as the ranking member on Foreign Relations—and as I have traveled the world—there is no doubt it has affected us around the world. People really do not understand whether we are going to be able to meet the obligations we have made from a security standpoint.

Again, where we are today is very predictable, and I don't want to be crass. Obviously, I know this is creating a hardship for some people who have been furloughed, and it is certainly affecting people around our country, and that is obviously not good. On the other hand, if there is some way for some good policy outcome that strengthens our country over the longer haul, which is why we are all here, then that is a good trade-off. We will see what happens.

Here is my concern: While the situation we are in is very predictable—and many people in this body predicted we would end up exactly where we are today in this box canyon—we knew people would still sign up for the new health care law, which some have tried to defund, in spite of the fact that government has shut down.

What I am concerned about is this: We have made great strides as a nation, and in this body, to reduce government outlays we have control over. This has not happened in this Nation since 1955 and 1956. Two years ago we were at \$1.43 trillion in annual outlays from a discretionary standpoint, and that is what we deal with in a CR. Last year we were at \$988 billion, and this year—if we continue to uphold the law we put in place—we will be at \$967 billion.

That is a phenomenal result for us to have achieved in this body and for our country—to have achieved to strengthen our Nation. While there may be ways of changing the way those outlays are done—and maybe there is mandatory spending that is substituted for discretionary spending. Maybe there are ways of doing it to make it more sensible to people in this body. It is truly remarkable that Washington figured out a way to reduce the amount of spending that was taking place. I know we can figure out a way to do that even smarter.

Let me get to the unpredictable point. Sometimes when people find themselves in a box canyon or in a place that is difficult, they begin doing things that are not in the interest of themselves, and certainly not in the interest of the body that they represent. What I am worried about is that while so many people have been focused on this shiny thing over here and so much of the Nation's focus has been on this shiny thing over here, what people