

health care reforms that will give Americans more health care choices at a lower cost.

Finally, our budget will start the process of putting major entitlement programs such as Social Security and Medicare on a sounder footing going forward. Right now, the Social Security trust fund is headed toward bankruptcy. If we don't take action, Social Security recipients could be facing a 25-percent cut in benefits by the year 2033. Medicare faces similar challenges to those faced by Social Security. Under the worst-case scenario, the Medicare trust fund could become insolvent by as early as 2021. That is just 6 short years away. The Republican budget would help preserve Medicare by extending the trust fund's solvency for an additional 5 years, which would protect retirees' benefits while giving policymakers additional time to ensure that this program provides support to seniors for decades to come.

I am proud that today the Republicans in Congress will ensure that we have a joint balanced budget resolution for the first time in 14 years, but I also wish to emphasize that is no more than what the American people should expect. The American people, after all, have to live within a budget; their government needs to do so as well.

Going forward, balanced budgets need to be the norm here in Congress. Washington has spent enough time working for its own interests. It is time to get Washington working again for American families.

This is the first time in 14 years that we have actually had a budget resolution and a conference report that balance within 10 years. As I said earlier, during my time here in the Senate, which hasn't been that long but about 10 years now, this is the first time—with the exception of 2009, in which we did a budget simply so the Democrats could pass ObamaCare through reconciliation—this is the first time we have done a budget that passed both chambers in the 10 years I have been here, with the exception perhaps of the first few years.

It is time to get Washington working again for the American people. It starts with passing the budget. That is why I am proud that Senator ENZI and others worked hard to get us where we are. I hope today we will ultimately have the votes necessary to pass this and do something which hasn't been done around here in a very long time but which is really essential for the good of the American people in this country.

#### RECESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess until 2:15 p.m. today for the weekly conference meetings and that the time during the recess count against the majority time on the budget conference report.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:51 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

#### CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 2016—CONFERENCE REPORT—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that time under any quorum call be equally divided between the two sides.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

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

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Thank you, Mr. President.

I rise today to speak in opposition to the Republican so-called budget. I call it a "so-called budget" because I do not believe even Republicans would actually pass appropriations consistent with it. It looks to me like it is just a show to keep extremists on the right happy. My guess is that practical Republicans cannot wait for President Obama to bail them out by negotiating appropriations higher.

Recently, we have seen impressive examples of committee bipartisanship. In Foreign Relations, Senator CORKER brought a unanimously bipartisan Iran resolution out of the poisonous turmoil surrounding that issue. In the HELP Committee, Senator ALEXANDER brought a unanimously bipartisan education bill out of committee on an issue that has long been contested. Even the intensely divided Environment and Public Works Committee brought out a chemical regulation bill with a strong bipartisan majority. But Budget? No chance.

Instead of working with Democrats on a real budget, Republicans produced a partisan ideological showcase. They cut programs for seniors, for low-income families, and for other vulnerable citizens and protected the wealthiest Americans from contributing even one dime in deficit reduction.

As we have seen in the past, Republicans care about deficit reduction only when it involves cutting programs for people who need help. But can they find a single tax loophole to cut? Not one.

This budget follows the Ryan budget off the cliff of shielding every single

subsidy and giveaway in the Tax Code. No special interest tax loophole is too grotesque for them. Big Oil tax subsidies, special low rates for hedge fund managers, private jet depreciation, for goodness' sake—tax giveaways that amount to nothing more than taxpayer subsidies for the wealthy and well connected—this budget loves and protects them all.

Not only do the Republicans protect every tax loophole, they propose eliminating the estate tax—a tax that only affects families worth over \$10 million—the top 0.2 percent. You may have heard a lot about the 1 percent. Well, this budget does even better than that. It confers a great, wonderful, fat favor on the top 0.2 percent and, at the same time, the budget will allow the taxes to increase on 13 million lower- and middle-income households—households with 25 million children. That is a \$300 billion tax giveaway to that 0.2 percent—to basically 5,000-some of the wealthiest families in America. And that big gift to those 5,000-and-some wealthiest families is paired with a tax hike for millions of families who are just getting by.

And, of course, it is lower-income and middle-class families who would suffer the most from the Republican spending cuts. Medicaid, food stamps, Pell grants, and job training all get axed. They hand Medicare over to private sector vouchers and kick 16 million Americans off of health insurance plans they obtained through the Affordable Care Act.

Today, across this Capitol, breast cancer advocates are asking for our support for investment to help cure that deadly disease. This budget cuts research for breast cancer and other deadly diseases. It slashes funding for nursing homes, including those that care for seniors with Alzheimer's. It even supports a 20-percent across-the-board benefit cut for disabled Americans—a 20-percent benefit cut for disabled Americans—by doubling down on the senseless House rule that can be used to create an artificial crisis and prevent a routine Social Security fix.

As for the investments that keep our Nation competitive in an increasingly global economy, all are attacked. From scientific research to education to infrastructure, the Republicans offer a radical plan of cuts.

In a nutshell, their behavior proves that the deficit is just a pretext for them to cut programs that Republicans have always opposed—programs that create jobs, support the middle class, and offer lifelines to the most vulnerable Americans.

Even transportation infrastructure—our roads and bridges—gets whacked. Much of our highway system dates back to the 1950s, and roads and bridges across the country are in dire need of repair and replacement. This budget fails to provide any new funding for infrastructure. It does not even ensure that current funding levels will be maintained.