

obstructionist wrench into the appropriations process they claim to want.

Some of us remember that the Democrats did not want to vote when they were in the majority. They also don't seem to want to vote when they are in the minority. I hope they are not dusting off the old filibuster summer playbook, especially in light of the letter they just sent to me about win-win opportunities and restoring regular order. Perhaps the most galling thing about Democrats again trying to blow up the appropriations process is this: They filibustered this appropriations bill and then walked into a press conference about Zika funding. They filibustered this bill and then walked into a press conference about Zika funding.

The appropriations process is the path for that funding. That is the way you do it. Preventing the spread of Zika is something both parties agree is a priority. The administration currently has funds to address the issue but has requested additional funds by the end of next month. Both Republicans and Democrats have been looking at different approaches to properly address the situation.

The senior Senator from Washington, Mrs. MURRAY, recently characterized that bipartisanship collaborative process as moving forward "in good faith." That is especially notable when you consider how difficult it is for the committee to move forward when the administration keeps it waiting month after month after month for information it needs, as has been the case with Zika, but progress is being made anyway. Then Democrats filibustered and upended the process. So how do we move forward now? I remember the second-ranking Democrat, Senator DURBIN, once shared some wisdom that seems particularly relevant. Here is what he said:

If you don't want to fight fires, don't be a firefighter. If you don't want to come to Congress and vote on tough issues, get another job somewhere else.

So here is the message to our Democratic colleagues: Do your job. Do your job. There are other areas where both sides have been able to find common ground. We have seen the truth of that in many important solutions passed by this Republican-led Senate already: permanent tax relief for families and small businesses, groundbreaking education reform that empowers parents and prevents Washington from imposing Common Core, the first long-term transportation solution in years—a solution that will finally allow us to address crumbling roads and infrastructure.

Whether it is pay raises for our troops, help for our veterans, or hope for the victims of human trafficking, we got a lot done last year with hard work and with cooperation. We have gotten more done this year with hard work and cooperation too. In the past 3 months, we passed a comprehensive North Korea sanctions bill, a bill to permanently ban Internet access taxes,

a measure to give the public more access to government records, a bill to help safeguard American intellectual property from theft, and critical legislation to help address our Nation's prescription opioid and heroin epidemic.

Just last week, we passed both the most pro-passenger, pro-security FAA reauthorization in years and the first major energy legislation since the Bush administration. So where are we? We now have a bipartisan opportunity to responsibly work through the individual funding bills. We now have a bipartisan opportunity to responsibly continue addressing funding issues like Zika.

What will it take? What it will take is for our Democratic colleagues to end this obstruction and work cooperatively across the aisle instead. That is not too much to ask. So let's take a step back and look at the bigger picture. I believe that when you give Senators and the people they represent more of a say in the legislative process, they are bound to take more of a stake in the legislative outcome, regardless of party.

That is why we have empowered committees and Members to take the lead in more areas. That is how we have gotten the Senate back to work in so many ways. I think Members in both parties have seen the benefits of it. So, yes, some may see a short-term political benefit in blowing up the appropriations process now, but I would also ask my friends to remember this: Restoring the appropriations process is something we all should want. Democrats have said it is what they want. Republicans have said it is what we want. It is what I have set out to do. I think it is the best way to give individual Senators in both parties more of a voice for their constituents in the funding process, to empower them to make smarter decisions about how taxpayer dollars are spent.

So we are going to give our colleagues an opportunity today to reconsider this filibuster. They don't have to block the appropriations process, which is the path for funding priorities such as Zika. I hope they will make the right choice. We have gotten so much done already with hard work and cooperation. I know there is much more we can accomplish for our country with a little more of each.

So let's keep striving to get more done for our country. The only way to do that is together.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

THE APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, when I first came to the Senate, I was so fortunate I was put on the Appropriations Committee that very first day I was here. I loved my assignment. For many years,

I had the good fortune of either chairing or being the ranking member of that Energy and Water Subcommittee. So I know a lot about that subcommittee—many successful bills, never an unsuccessful bill did we bring to the floor. We did them quickly. I worked mostly with the Senator from New Mexico by the name of Domenici. We worked together and got a lot done for the country. So I know this Water and Energy bill. The Republican leader complains about what happened yesterday on the Energy and Water appropriations bill.

On the Democratic side, there is no one who is more liked, appreciated, and who is more imbued as a historic figure than DIANNE FEINSTEIN of California. She became involved in politics at an early age and was thrown into a maelstrom of violence when the mayor was murdered. She had to step in and take over that very difficult job.

As a Senator, she has been valiant, and she wants to get things done. No one can call her rank partisan, because she isn't. But like all of us over here, she was terribly disappointed yesterday and the day before when all of a sudden, the bill is finished—the bill is finished; the Energy and Water bill is finished—and out of nowhere at 12:15 p.m. on Tuesday we get an amendment that really is something that is a poison pill if there ever were one.

The only thing holding up the bill is this poison pill amendment. We agreed to pass it yesterday. DIANNE FEINSTEIN agrees; pass it. She likes it the way it is. We like it the way it is.

So if they are as serious about doing their job as the Republican leader said, we are happy to vote on this bill now. But if Republicans continue to insist on these poison pill amendments—and there is no question that is what this is—we are going to have to continue as we have.

It takes a lot of gall for my friend the Republican leader to talk about filibusters. I repeat what I have said here before, but it is worth repeating. As soon as Obama was elected, the Republicans met in Washington, and they reported in a 2-day-long meeting—which had been reported on numerous times—that they came to two conclusions.

No. 1, Obama will not be re-elected. They failed at that miserably. He got more than 5 million votes than his opponent. But on the other thing they have succeeded in most instances, and that is to oppose everything President Obama wants. That continues to today.

As far as poison pill amendments, we are on record numerous times talking about why it is wrong to have these poison pill riders. For example, I said on the floor:

True bipartisanship also requires both parties to resist the temptation to pursue poison pill riders that appeal to their own supporters, but that are so strongly opposed by the other party that their inclusion in appropriations bills would grind the process to a halt. No doubt there will be many opportunities next year for both sides to score political points. But the appropriations process is

not the place for that. And I hope members in both parties will agree that it's more important to fund the government than to play politics.

That is what I said when we started this Congress, and that is what the Senators who wrote this letter, which my friend the Republican leader talked about, want to do. We want to do appropriations bills, and we were on a rush to get the first one done. We were headed to victory, and then out of nowhere comes a poison pill rider. Everyone acknowledges that is what it is. There are many definitions of a poison pill rider but, of course, as the President has said, one is when you can't sign the bill.

So it would be to everyone's interest if we would simply step back, pass the bill that exists, and figure out some other way to try to embarrass the President. This is not the way to do it.

Finally, my friend the Republican leader comes to the floor and talks about what a great amount of work we have done in the Senate. We have done as much as we can. We have tried to support everything.

We are a responsible minority. We have not done to them what they have done to us. They opposed everything we tried to do—everything. We had to move to hundreds of motions to proceed.

We are pleased we got the energy legislation done. We tried for 5 years to get it done. We were filibustered every step of the way. We couldn't get it done. So it was brought up again. We cooperated, and we got it done. So virtually everything the Republican leader talked about were things that we tried to do before and they wouldn't let us.

Let's talk about what we haven't done. They talked about having passed opioid legislation. Oops, there is one problem. They didn't fund it. Flint, MI—oops, they did nothing. They ignored it for months and months and months.

There was a mistake. No one disagrees there was a mistake made—not by us but by the Republicans—in drafting a deal with renewable energy credits—not done.

There is the Zika virus. My friend says: Well, we are trying to get information. That is ridiculous. We will hear more about that in a few minutes.

There are no district court nominations, no hearings on the Supreme Court.

There is no need to go over what hasn't been done.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— H.R. 3038

Mr. REID. Mr. President, imagine though, if you will, that this great country is facing a potential outbreak of a dangerous virus. It is nothing that was made up in the movies, nothing that is on a special TV show. It is actually a potential outbreak of a dangerous virus.

Imagine, mosquitoes are carrying a virus that affects pregnant women, a virus that causes birth defects in babies, not allowing their brains and skulls to develop. The skulls collapse on a number of them. Brains don't develop. It is a virus that can cause men and women to develop nervous system disorders that can result in paralysis. We don't know the full extent of this.

We had a briefing here a week ago today with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health. We had the Secretary of Health and Human Services here. They are in a state of emergency. They need to do something. They need to develop a vaccine. This is on its way. It is here.

It is here in Puerto Rico. We have cases reported in the State of my friend, Florida. He is someone with whom I have served in the House and in the Senate. Senator NELSON of Florida is one of our very outstanding Members.

We already know there are cases in Florida. Thirty States are going to be affected with these mosquitoes as the weather warms. I have been told in the past that mosquitoes have never caused birth defects. They have caused all kinds of problems with malaria and other things, but not birth defects. Now they are here.

Imagine, after what I have just laid out to you, that those in control of Congress do nothing to address the imminent danger posed by this virus. It sounds like some science fiction novel; doesn't it? But it is not.

This is real life in America. This is the reality—the Republicans' refusal to respond to the threat of Zika. My friend mentioned that the senior Senator from Washington is involved in trying to come up with something for Zika. She said yesterday she hasn't heard a word from the Republicans in more than a week on this important issue.

This is real life. Zika is a scourge that is already affecting our country, as I have outlined. It is time we pass an emergency appropriations bill to take care of it, to fight it. Out of tradition, common sense, and precedent, a public health threat is an emergency, and it demands a response.

As I indicated, hundreds of people in Puerto Rico—quickly approaching a thousand—are infected. As the weather warms, as I have indicated, it is going to multiply throughout the continental United States. Thirty States will likely be affected with this mosquito—this killer mosquito.

More than 2 months ago my friend said: We need more from the administration. More than 2 months ago the administration—desperate as they were—sent a letter to Congress saying we need an emergency request of \$1.9 billion—out of desperation.

What did the White House do? Two years ago we were fighting Ebola. It is still a serious worldwide problem and a problem for our country. They had to

take money from vaccines they were working on for Ebola and other things and start doing Zika. Now we have a situation where both the mosquito-caused Zika and the Ebola scourge are underfunded now. Republicans have done a double whammy here. We need to give the money back to the agencies that are doing something to help Ebola and fund Zika.

They haven't lifted a finger that we are aware of. As I said yesterday, the senior Senator from Washington hasn't heard from the so-called negotiators in more than a week. They refuse to do anything, even as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health are pleading for us to act. They have been very clear about the funding they need to fight Zika. They are not making up things. They have told us in line and verse.

My friend, the Republican leader said: We need more from the administration. It wasn't all that long ago that my friend the Republican leader was singing a much different song. This is what he said about funding the outbreak of Ebola 2 years ago, and it is a direct quote:

I think they should have anything they want. . . . Whatever the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] thinks they need, we'll give it to them.

He said the same thing 7 years ago when we were faced with another real problem, swine flu. This is what he said then: "So if [the Administration] needs anything additionally from Congress, I know we'll be happy to provide it on a totally bipartisan basis."

Fast forward 7 years, and the Republicans now in the majority won't provide the requested funding for Zika. Why? We know why. They can't get it through over here. They can't get it done.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health know what they need. They have told us. They told anyone who will listen.

So why can't the Republicans give it to them. If they won't give the experts the resources they need to combat Zika, what do they propose? We could ask the Zika-carrying mosquitoes: Don't breed this year.

Remember, anyway, that it is in the last term of a two-term President. Maybe we shouldn't do it this year.

The Senate should not leave today without addressing this serious issue. We shouldn't be taking 10 days off as a dangerous virus threatens this Nation—and it is threatening us. The Republicans should do their job and pass a \$1.9 billion emergency spending bill to help protect Americans from the Zika virus.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, will the Senator yield before he makes the request?

Mr. REID. I am pleased to do that. I want the record to be spread with the fact that this good man—more than any other Senator, because of what he