

in our skies, such as ensuring that unmanned aerial vehicles don't interfere with emergency response and improving mental health screening for pilots. It includes a number of consumer protection provisions, too, such as refunds for lost or delayed baggage and improvements to travel for disabled passengers and parents with small children.

I especially thank Senator THUNE for guiding this critical bill through the legislative process and for his work to include even more security provisions to keep Americans safe.

Every Senator should support this bill today so we can send it to the President's desk immediately. With cooperation now, we can finish our work on these critical bills. With continued cooperation in the coming days, we will be able to finish our work on other important legislation as well.

For instance, yesterday we voted to go to conference on the Energy Policy Modernization Act, which represents the first broad energy legislation to pass the Senate since the Bush administration. By updating and reforming our energy policies and infrastructure, this bill can help Americans save more energy, produce more energy, and pay less for energy.

This much needed legislation wouldn't have been possible without the resilient efforts of the Energy Committee chair, Senator MURKOWSKI, and the ranking member, Senator CANTWELL, to move it forward. I am pleased the Senate took the next step to advance this bill, and I hope we can arrive at a final agreement in the near future.

Unfortunately, there are areas where our colleagues have blocked critical progress on issues such as Zika control funding and support for our veterans. Here was the headline in a newspaper this week: "Reid: Senate Dems will block Zika funding again." "[W]hich means," the article explained, "there will be no further avenues to pass a funding bill to combat Zika for the rest of the summer."

Democrats used to say Zika was an imminent threat. Now they are threatening to extend the filibuster of the funding we need to fight Zika and protect women's health. Why? It seems clear enough. They think dysfunction works well for them politically, so they are trying to manufacture some regardless of who gets hurt in the process. They have tried to muddy the issue with extraneous arguments and half-truths, but they just don't stand up to serious scrutiny.

Let us examine a few of the things they have said about this compromise conference report. Our Democratic friends pretend it would underfund Zika. Actually, it contains the exact \$1.1 billion funding they just voted for last month.

Democrats pretend it contains partisan offsets. Actually, the offsets have bipartisan buy-in. Two of the three offsets have explicit bipartisan support.

The third takes unspent money that was set aside for health care in the territories but cannot be used and actually uses those funds for—get this—health care in the territories.

Democrats pretend the compromise conference report would weaken clean water protections. Actually, it temporarily—just temporarily—waives a duplicative paperwork provision that Democrats themselves call "unnecessary for the protection of our environment" and a "waste of taxpayer dollars." This temporary provision would only apply to pesticides already approved—already approved—by the EPA, and it represents the only real way to commence with the kind of anti-mosquito efforts we need—efforts the EPA Administrator herself assures us are not only safe but "perhaps the most important tool we can use right now"—as the vaccine takes a period of time to develop.

Democrats also pretend the compromise conference report would prohibit funding or deny access for birth control. Actually, it provides more resources for health care, including preventive care, than the Zika bill Democrats voted for just last month. This compromise bill directs those health care dollars to the very places you would expect, such as hospitals, public health departments, community health centers, and Medicaid.

Democrats are now upset because a political supporter doesn't get a special carve-out, so they are demanding an earmark for this partisan group as the cost of ending their attack on women's health and their blockade of anti-Zika funding. Of course, Democrats would like us all to ignore the fact that the very same partisan campaign organization would not have been able to access these Medicaid funds in the President's Zika request either.

So it is hard to decide which of these excuses is the most disingenuous. Maybe it is the false claim this bill cuts funding for veterans. It actually increases veterans funding to record levels, by the way. Just as Democrats are pushing a partisan proposal to provide political cover on Zika, it actually would leave veterans funding behind.

So, look, I think we get this. Democrats have a partisan interest in blocking critical anti-Zika funding. That is what is going on here, but Americans are asking them to please just put politics aside for once and think of the national interest. Does anyone—anyone—seriously believe pregnant mothers care about manufactured squabbles over offsets and earmarks and duplicative paperwork? They want Washington to kill mosquitoes and they want them to do it now. They want to see a vaccine developed—and quickly. They want to see their unborn babies protected from a devastating virus that can have lifetime consequences. What they do not want to see, what they are not interested in observing, is one more manufactured partisan excuse from our colleagues over here on the other side.

To quote the top Democrat on the Committee on Appropriations, "Mosquitoes don't care about the budget process." She is right.

The time for games is over. This is our chance to pass anti-Zika funding, and there is only one way to do it. Vote yes on the compromise Zika control and veterans conference report before us and send it on down to the President.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

LEGISLATION BEFORE THE SENATE AND JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Republican leader celebrates the opioid legislation and the FAA bill, but both are missed opportunities. There is no funding in the opioid bill. There were editorials all over the country yesterday about that. I read here on the Senate floor, it is in the RECORD, about The New York Times saying it was really wrong to try to claim credit for doing something on opioids when there is no money to do it.

The FAA bill—I will talk about that in a little more detail in a little bit—is another missed opportunity to do what is right to help, to help the Republican leader keep his word.

CARA, the opioid legislation, has no real funding to solve the real problem.

Over the last week, Democrats have exhausted every avenue to try and work with Republicans on a Zika funding measure. Democrats had the audacity to expect the Republican leader to live up to his promise in April of bipartisan work on Zika. This is what the Republican leader said in April:

We all are very much aware that this is a serious crisis. We'll be working with the administration, with Democrats.

But his actions, especially over the last couple of weeks, clearly illustrate that he was never really interested in a bipartisan solution. For example, the President offered a meeting with Senator McCONNELL, Speaker RYAN, Secretary Burwell, and Director of OMB Shaun Donovan, to work on the Zika crisis. The Speaker and the Republican leader refused that meeting. We offered to reintroduce the Senate's bipartisan Zika compromise from what we sent to the House. We would do it again as a freestanding bill. That bill had 89 votes. Eighty-nine Senators voted for it.

We have offered Republicans legitimate compromises in the hopes they would join us at the negotiating table, but it is clear that they don't want to stay in DC. They want to rush to Cleveland and wave the flag for Donald Trump. That is why they are imposing imaginary deadlines on Zika legislation.

The Wall Street Journal reported yesterday that “Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL today rejected that offer, saying the time for such negotiations had passed”—talking about our offer, our latest offer. The Republican leader is saying there is no time to work on Zika. Well, I would suggest that I disagree with that.

Starting this Friday—right here, July 15—we are going to begin the longest recess in the Senate in 60 years. Sixty years ago, there was not much going on in this country, relatively speaking. We had far fewer people, 100 million fewer people. We had a less complicated government in many ways, so there was an opportunity at that time to take the time off, but 60 years later, there is no time to do that.

To say there is no time to work on Zika—give us all a break. There is plenty of time—7 weeks, to be exact. I guess a couple months of paid vacation is more important than protecting pregnant women and their babies from the terrible birth defects caused by Zika. There is no reason we can’t stay here and work on protecting women and their babies, but Republicans are in such a hurry to coronate Trump in Cleveland, they are willing to sacrifice helping their constituents.

The Republican leader announced yesterday that he will be speaking at the Republican convention next week. I guess the Republican leader is rushing for the exit without funding Zika so he will have time to prepare his speech and polish it because I am sure it will really help Donald Trump a lot in his election efforts. The Republican leader cares more about his time off and cheering Donald Trump than protecting the women of America and their babies from this horrible virus.

Let’s be clear. It is obvious that Republicans are choosing Trump and some time off over protecting American women from the Zika virus. This is a really bad, revolting set of priorities, and every Republican in this building and the office buildings surrounding this Capitol should be ashamed. They shouldn’t fool themselves—every Republican in Congress should know that if they walk away without funding Zika, the repercussions are going to be severe.

I can’t recall ever, having been around here a long time—even before I came to Congress, I worked here—watching a party so willingly move to its own destruction. That is what Republicans seem to be intent on doing. Maybe they don’t like being in the majority. It is hard to be in the majority. We are trying to save the Republicans from themselves, but they won’t let us. We have pursued every avenue possible to find a bipartisan Zika bill path forward that can pass both Houses and be signed by the President. It shouldn’t be hard. Women and babies across America are counting on Republicans to come to their senses and pass a bill before we leave here on a 2-month vacation, but if Republicans refuse, if they

can’t see the writing on the wall, we can’t make them read the writing on the wall. It is up to them to open their eyes and read the writing on the wall.

Look at the time we have to do something on Zika. Look at the time—July 15, August. See all these big black lines? We are not here. We come back on September 6. July is gone, August is gone, and part of September is gone. We have a lot of time to be here and do some work.

I say to my Republican colleagues, sit down with us. We have offered compromise after compromise. To hear my friend talk about, oh, I can’t understand why they won’t accept preventing Planned Parenthood from taking care of these women—if there were ever a time in the history of America where women wanted to do something about birth control, how about now?

My Republican friend says: I don’t understand why they are concerned about Planned Parenthood not being able to take care of these women. I don’t understand why they are concerned about changing the environmental laws dealing with the Clean Water Act. I don’t understand that.

Their legislation takes \$500 million from veterans that we were going to use to process claims. For him to come and say we are increasing veterans money is just not true. Everyone knows that the \$543 million they have here is an offset from ObamaCare. I could raise a point of order right now, and it would fall automatically. Everyone knows that. Taking money from Ebola—there is not much left there. Ebola is still a crisis. We know that. We remember that from 2 years ago.

But what is always so interesting is why in the world, if they are so interested in doing something about this, would they stick a provision in their legislation that they reinstate the ability to fly the Confederate flag over military cemeteries? How is that for a compromise?

So this calendar is going to stay here. Let’s look at it for a while and see what time we have left. The Republican Senate is being defined by its unfinished business. It is not just Zika; we could go on for quite some time. I will mention a couple things.

How about giving serious consideration to protecting Americans by funding our military and our national security, addressing gun violence, or providing the necessary resources to attack our Nation’s opioid crisis.

Through their historic inaction, Republicans are refusing to treat the Federal judiciary with the respect it deserves and the Constitution demands. The senior Senator from Iowa has turned the once proud and independent Judiciary Committee—my friend—we have been together for 34 years in the Congress of the United States—the senior Senator from Illinois is a member of that committee. He loves his work on that committee; he has told me numerous times. But that once proud and independent Judiciary Committee has

been turned into a partisan Republican opposition research operation. The Republican Judiciary Committee now has a singular focus: winning the White House for Donald Trump.

The Judiciary chairman has wasted millions of taxpayer dollars trying to embarrass Hillary Clinton during her stalwart term as Secretary of State of this great country. They failed, of course. Senator GRASSLEY wrote countless letters demanding State Department documents. He even once went after a woman who worked at the State Department and was having a baby. He wanted the records to make sure he could document that. He scoured sensitive records belonging to Secretary Clinton’s aides. He was obsessed with digging up political dirt. He found none. But, like the Benghazi Committee in the House, Senator GRASSLEY has wasted millions of taxpayer dollars and produced zero. Now that the FBI has closed the book on Secretary Clinton’s emails, Senator GRASSLEY is resorting to questioning the integrity of career FBI officials, calling their investigation “suspect.”

Senator GRASSLEY’s efforts to elect Donald Trump don’t end with his partisan attacks regarding Secretary Clinton. The senior Senator from Iowa has obstructed qualified, consensus judicial nominees in the hopes that Trump will win in November and remake the judiciary in his image. Think about that. Unlike past Judiciary Committee chairs, Senator GRASSLEY is content to put partisanship above a functioning judiciary.

The number of vacancies under President Obama has skyrocketed. Republicans’ obstruction is putting them in the history books—but for the wrong reason. Last year, Senate Republicans made history by confirming the fewest judges in a long time. This year, they seem determined to shortchange the judiciary even further. We have a myriad of judicial emergencies around the country, meaning the judges can’t get their work done. These courts have more cases than judges can handle, and that has more than doubled.

Justice is being denied for millions of Americans, but under Chairman GRASSLEY, the Judiciary Committee spends its time playing politics, not confirming judges. It seems the only thing deserving the chairman’s attention is electing Donald Trump, ensuring he gets as many judicial appointments as possible. Nowhere is that more apparent than with the current vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court and GRASSLEY’s obstruction of the highly qualified Chief Judge Merrick Garland. No one can find anything dealing with his education, his qualifications, his judicial temperament, his integrity—he is top of the line, as was indicated some time ago by ORRIN HATCH.

President Obama nominated Garland 100 days ago. He serves as the chief judge of the DC Circuit Court of Appeals. He was unanimously rated as

“well qualified” by the American Bar Association—the highest rating possible. By any measure, he is exactly the type of fairminded, consensus nominee the Senate should be considering for the vacancy. But Judge Garland can’t make his case to the American people because Senator GRASSLEY refuses to even hold a hearing on the nomination. Chairman GRASSLEY has come up with a myriad of excuses to block the nomination, none of which hold water. As the Des Moines Register said recently, “Grassley’s excuses are purely political.”

Iowans aren’t being fooled. They know that the chairman’s real goal is holding the Supreme Court open for Donald Trump to do with what he wants. The Judiciary chairman has already said Trump would “appoint the right type of people”—boy, I will tell you, that must be a real stretch—“the right type of people” to the Supreme Court. The senior Senator from Iowa obviously places a high value on Trump’s judgment, which has proven to be so good the last year. Senator GRASSLEY is holding a Supreme Court vacancy for a man who accused an Indiana-born judge of being unable to do his job because of his racial heritage. His parents came from Mexico. Apparently he would like to see that brand of thinking brought to the Nation’s courts.

It is time for Senator GRASSLEY to stop playing politics with his committee and give Judge Garland a fair hearing. It is time for his committee to address the numerous lower court vacancies and damaging judicial emergencies throughout the country. The American people deserve a functioning judicial system led by the Judiciary Committee in the Senate. They have had enough with Republican excuses. Iowans and the Nation are waiting. It is time for Senator GRASSLEY and Senate Republicans to do their job.

Mr. President, I would ask the Chair to announce what the Senate is going to do the rest of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2016—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany S. 524, which the clerk will report.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

Conference report to accompany S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 11

a.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, pending before the Senate is an important bill. It is a bill that relates to the opioid epidemic in America—an epidemic which is linked directly to the heroin epidemic in America and the sad reality of the deaths that are occasioned by heroin overdoses.

The prescription opioid and heroin epidemic claimed 28,647 American lives in 2014—1,652 in my State of Illinois. That is a 30-percent increase in just 4 years.

I have seen this devastation firsthand. I have sat with parents who have lost their kids. I have met with young teenagers who were addicted. Thank goodness that some of them have been able—with treatment, counseling, and strength—to fight off that addiction.

The reality is obvious. This narcotics epidemic is not an inner city problem. It is an American problem. It is a problem that not only touches the inner cities of America, but it also touches every other community. There is no town too small, no suburb too wealthy to escape the opioid and heroin epidemic.

I have been across my State, from one end to the other, at roundtables with law enforcement, with medical professionals, with those who do addiction treatment and with those who have lived through these addictions. I have seen firsthand what it has done to communities and families and lives. We need a forceful response, and we are going to vote on one in about an hour. It is called the CARA bill. It is a bill that moves us in the right direction when it comes to dealing with this addiction.

The conference report has many important elements to it, and that is why I am going to support it. It includes my proposal to require reforms at the FDA, or the Food and Drug Administration, to ensure better oversight of dangerous and addictive opioid drugs before they are approved for sale in our country. My provisions will ensure the FDA convenes scientific advisory committees before approving new opioid drugs and that the Pediatric Advisory Committee has a voice in the decision.

We require the FDA to consider the public health impacts before allowing more addictive products to come onto the market. We direct Federal health agencies to develop plans for continuing medical education with doctors and other providers who prescribe opioids. We require the FDA to encourage drug companies to make abuse-deterrent formulations of these dangerous drugs.

The CARA conference report also includes a proposal I have worked on to improve State prescription drug monitoring programs. This legislation will make it easier for States to share information about overprescribing and overusing opioids, it gives doctors more information to better perform their prescribing practices.

I am pleased the CARA conference report includes new grant programs to expand access to naloxone—the life-saving anecdote—to promote treatment alternatives instead of arrests for those suffering from addiction and to create flexibility and treatment options for those who need medication-assisted therapy or pregnant women who need specialized care.

Having said all of these positive things about what we are to vote on, let me state the obvious. When only 12 percent of the people in Illinois are able to receive care for their addiction, and there is a 12-week wait at facilities for vulnerable patients to get into drug treatment, authorizing new programs, which this bill does, is good but not good enough. We need to make an investment. We need to put taxpayers’ dollars behind this commitment to end this epidemic, and it is needed now.

That is why Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN of New Hampshire offered an amendment during the Senate floor consideration of this bill. Her amendment would have put \$600 million into actually making the bill work, enforcing it, investing in it. It failed.

During the CARA conference meetings, Senator MURRAY and Congressman PALLONE offered amendments to ensure that Congress would put some money into the promise of this bill. They couldn’t get it passed in a conference dominated by the Republican majority. Why? Why would these efforts be blocked when the Republicans are joining us and saying this is a national problem that deserves our immediate attention? Because Republicans have said they have already proposed to increase funding in appropriation bills to take care of this. Yet many Republicans are supporting a continuing resolution that freezes funding at this year’s level and provides for no increase in opioid epidemic treatment. When they say they are going to put more money in and then call for a continuing resolution, they know and we know that it is a sham.

The Republicans are opposing an increase in funding for this bill by saying they already proposed increased funding in another bill, but at the same time they are advocating a freeze, or flat-funding a continuing resolution. They can’t have it both ways.

It is confusing, but those of us who live in this world know what they are up to. They want to take the credit for passing this bill and the promise of funding it in the future into the election in November but not provide the money that is needed to make it work. That is playing games with people’s lives. America deserves better.

Failing to provide the dollars today is not going to help those who are currently suffering. It is not going to help that mother who was awake all last night worrying about a son or a daughter who is facing an addiction, praying they can get that child they love into treatment in time to break that addiction and save their lives.