

repeat it. Possessing a fierce work ethic, incredible intellect, and a determination to get things done, Mr. CORKER is a builder who reaches across the aisle, extends his hand, and doesn't relent until there is a deal done. I can't think of a more frustrating place to try and bring that attitude than Afghanistan. We were there at a time when our own law enforcement had just informed us that then-President Hamid Karzai's half-brother had stolen nearly a half billion dollars from the American taxpayers. Chairman CORKER unleashed on the President of Afghanistan with a focused communication that I will not soon forget, and that left me looking around to make sure there were folks from our side in the room.

He was respectful and supportive of our men and women of the Armed Forces. He was engaged and purposeful with the leaders of Afghanistan. In every single meeting we had in Pakistan and Afghanistan and then in the follow-on in Jordan and Israel, BOB was a blizzard of activity with purpose. What an introduction that was.

What I realized on our trip is that my background as a county executive who did a lot in land use and development and BOB's background as an entrepreneur and a builder and then a mayor and someone passionate about providing housing to those in need meant that we had a lot in common. He has an attitude of wanting to get a lot of things done and refusing to be satisfied with a body where folks talk too much and accomplish too little. So from that first trip, I concluded Senator CORKER was someone with whom I could really get things done.

He is the sort of person who has been willing at times to put Nation above party and to be always committed to his home State of Tennessee.

I do want to make sure I also say thank you to his wife Elizabeth and to his daughters, Emily and Julia, and his family, including his grandchildren, who have supported him in this service.

His dozen years in the Senate has left a lasting legacy, and that is only because he has a family who has loved and supported him even as he has traveled relentlessly around the world and worked tirelessly to tackle our budget issues. As a builder, an entrepreneur, and successful businessman, BOB can read a balance sheet, and he knows that ours is badly out of whack. As a member of the Budget Committee in my first few years here, he was relentless at delivering a message to anyone who was here that we were headed toward a reckoning. That is a piece of unfinished business that I feel some obligation to try and carry forward in Mr. CORKER's honor.

As you heard his colleagues say, though, it was at moments of BOB's tireless, relentless energy and his determination to build things and get things done that he encountered the tragic realities of the world that most moved him. A trip to Haiti opened his eyes to the profound need for housing

in this region of the world. Much later, a trip to the Philippines to see the tragedy of young women ensnared by sex traffickers profoundly touched him and moved him. It is this combination of a relentless will, great intellect, and a huge heart that has made Senator CORKER—Chairman CORKER—such a successful leader here.

Whether meeting with world leaders, fighting to solve budget issues, or chairing the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, there is universal agreement about his passion, his character, and his integrity. That is because he genuinely listens to people, asks them thoughtful, sometimes tough, very focused questions, and then gets moving toward solving a problem.

I asked for a review of the bills that we have worked on, and it is longer than the time I have allotted. So let me just give a few highlights. One of the issues that bears mentioning is that in a deeply divided, often too partisan Congress, where too few Members are willing to work across the aisle to achieve results, my work on legislation with Chairman CORKER has led to most of the things that I can say with confidence have made a difference in my short 8 years here.

We recently worked together to reauthorize PEPFAR, President George W. Bush's emergency program for AIDS relief, in just September of this year. We worked together—this is really Senator CORKER's issue and his leadership—to pass the End Modern Slavery Initiative Act, a critical step in fighting the scourge of slavery around the world today. We worked to pass the Global Food Security Act, which authorized USAID's Emergency Food Security Program, and we worked tirelessly—work I intend to continue—to make our food aid more efficient and focused.

There is the Water for the World Act, which promotes safe, clean drinking water for a billion people around the world and was signed into law in 2014.

Most recently, there was a bill we spent a great deal of time on and where his staff was particularly effective, the BUILD Act, which will deploy \$60 billion of American private capital around the world, at no cost to American taxpayers, in a way that meets the challenges we face from China, investing everywhere in the world. It allows us to step up the skills and strength of our private sector to help build and meet the needs of a growing world. Working to implement the BUILD Act and to execute on BOB's vision will be one of the things I will tend to this coming year, as well as making sure that the Electrify Africa Act, which we worked on together, is implemented this coming year, and this will be something I look forward to doing.

Working on making sure that the End Modern Slavery Initiative Act is carried forward this coming Congress is something I look forward to.

What I will deeply miss is time with Senator CORKER. It was at Easter time

last year that he asked me on short notice if I thought we should go to the fastest growing refugee camp in the world, Bidi Bidi, in Uganda, where more than a quarter-million people were living after fleeing war-torn South Sudan. I went to my wife and said: I sort of planned a quiet weekend at home this year, what do you think? She said: There is no better place on Earth you can be than with BOB CORKER. She and I both have been impressed with his tireless commitment to making a difference in the world, and the impact of that trip on both of us—of spending that weekend not in the comfort or quiet of our own homes in our home States but with people who had just fled violence, torture, rape, and abuse, and to provide some measure of comfort and confidence to them and to gain insight into how we are helping around the world—touched my heart and will affect the whole rest of my service and my life.

Let me just say this in closing. We have had a remarkable time serving together in Foreign Relations. Chairman CORKER has shown us how Members of this body should act. We have real differences. He is a conservative Republican. He is of the opposite party. He comes to things with different principles. But he has been relentless in finding solutions, and the problems that face us will not be solved without leaders like Chairman CORKER.

It has been my honor to have the opportunity to work with him on a few issues. Frankly, I wish more Members were here to talk about all the other issues—from financial services to the auto industry to things around the world—that I know are pressing business in this short lameduck session.

Let me say this. I am eager to see what Chairman CORKER does next, because his relentless energy, huge heart, and great intellect have made such a lasting difference here. I am eager to find out what he is determined to build next. There is nothing to which he has bent his will toward that hasn't been shaped by his character, his integrity, and his kindness.

It has been a true blessing, Mr. CORKER, to serve alongside you and, in some small way, to try to earn the opportunity to make a difference in this country and in this world with you. Thank you and thank you for your service to our Nation.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

FUNDING THE GOVERNMENT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, later today, the House is poised to send us a 2-week continuing resolution, which will give us time to hash out the remainder of the appropriations process this year. I expect it will pass this Chamber later this afternoon. President Trump and my Republican colleagues now have to decide what they want to do after those 2 weeks are up and, hopefully, even sooner.

As everybody knows, Democrats have offered to pass the bipartisan DHS appropriations bill agreed to 6 months ago, which includes \$1.6 billion for border security. There has been some confusion about that figure.

Let me be clear. The \$1.6 billion cannot be used to construct any part of President Trump's 30-foot-tall, concrete border wall. It can be used only for fencing, using technology currently deployed at the border, only where the experts say fencing is appropriate and makes sense as a security feature.

This is something Democrats have always been for: smart, effective, appropriate border security. This is so good that every Republican appropriator signed off on that bill a few months ago, including Senator MCCONNELL, Senator SHELBY, Senator RUBIO, and Senator GRAHAM. They were all for it.

This is a bipartisan compromise proposal. If they can't go for the proposal that they signed off on and negotiated because President Trump is pounding the table in an irrational way, there is a second option. Democrats have also offered to pass the six bipartisan appropriations bills and a continuing resolution for the Department of Homeland Security. This continuing resolution doesn't resolve this issue but continues to fund the Homeland Security Department. We think that continuing resolution should be for a year.

Both options would receive 60 votes in the Senate, would pass in the House, and would get us home in time for the Christmas holiday, which I know many people want to do. I have heard that from many of my Republican friends.

As I said, either option would keep the government funded over Christmas. We don't want to see the government shut down over Christmas, even though President Trump seems to brag that he wants one. The one and only way we approach a shutdown is if President Trump refuses both of our proposals and demands \$5 billion or more for a border wall.

The wall request is a nonstarter for many reasons. Here are three:

First, when President Trump proposed this as a candidate, he said: "I will have Mexico pay for that wall. Mark my words." The idea that the American taxpayer now has to foot the bill doesn't make sense.

Second, there is no plan for the wall. They haven't said where they want to build it or how high it is. Let me make clear that I don't like any wall, but how can you spend \$5 billion when there is no plan? It shows that this is

sort of political fodder for President Trump. It appeals to his base, but he doesn't even care that much that his whole government, his whole administration has not submitted any specific plans.

Third, last year we put \$1.345 billion into Homeland Security for border security. Not a nickel of that has been spent on a wall. It couldn't be. The language didn't allow it. But virtually none of it has been spent at all. They still have that \$1.34 billion they haven't even spent the vast majority of, and already they are demanding \$5 billion more.

Some would say demanding \$1.6 billion more is too much, but the idea that they haven't spent last year's money and they are demanding such a huge amount this year makes no sense at all. To ask the American taxpayer to foot the bill for an unplanned, unnecessary, ineffective border wall is just preposterous.

We know why President Trump is doing this, as he does so many things. It is a throwaway idea to fire up his base. I am ashamed that my Republican colleagues, who know better, are going along.

If President Trump wants to throw a temper tantrum and shut down the government over Christmas over the wall, that is his decision, but there are two sensible options on the table to avoid one. We do not want to let a Trump temper tantrum govern our policies or cause the shutdown of the government, which everyone on both sides of the aisle knows is the wrong idea.

One final point: By letting the President's demands get in the way, my Republican colleagues are, in effect, ceding Congress's authority over the appropriations process to the President. Leader MCCONNELL has repeatedly said that he wants regular order on appropriations in the Senate. In fact, that has been one of the few bipartisan high moments that this Senate has had.

Last year, we passed a good appropriations process and came together on an omnibus. This year, we have funded close to three-quarters of the government already—bipartisan, passed by a large majority. That is how it should work. It should work the same way for the Department of Homeland Security. Regular order would dictate that the Senate consider the bipartisan DHS appropriations bill that has been passed out of committee and been agreed to by both parties here on the floor. In the meantime, the six other bipartisan appropriations bills that have also been agreed to by both parties are being held hostage over this unnecessarily, to any objective observer.

If my friend Leader MCCONNELL is so concerned about regular order, he would bring up the remaining appropriations bills, as agreed to, for a vote. He would tell President Trump that the bipartisan conference bill, the bipartisan compromise—or a CR—is the way to go to avoid a shutdown.

NOMINATION OF BERNARD L. MCNAMEE

Madam President, on another matter, yesterday, all 49 Democrats voted against considering the nomination of Bernard McNamee to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and that was for good reason. McNamee has spent the bulk of his career boosting fossil fuels and slandering renewable energy. His views are so anachronistic, regressive, and counterfactual that I am sure most of my Republican colleagues would not agree with him. He has lied about how renewable energies impact the electric grid. He has called support for clean energy "organized propaganda" and has pitched the debate between fossil fuels and renewables, in his words, as a "clash between liberty and tyranny." My Republican friends, these words sound absurd. You would think I was making them up because it would so vilify Mr. McNamee, but my Republican friends can see on video every one of these statements that he made.

At a time when our country is plagued by wildfires and flooding, at a time when more powerful storms and hurricanes buffet our coasts, at a time when average Americans are feeling the devastating effects of climate change right now, we should not elevate someone so biased in favor of the fossil fuels that caused these problems in the first place.

We have a final vote today. Every Democrat has voted no. We need one Republican to switch to defeat this awful nomination. I hope my colleagues will think about it.

Please, look up the record. Don't just listen to my speech. Just look at what this man has said, and I think a good number of you might want to vote no.

On the front page of the New York Times this morning, there was a report about how the emission of greenhouse gases has actually accelerated in the past few years. Climate change is going to be a defining issue of our generation and a defining issue in future elections.

The vote on McNamee clearly shows the difference between the two parties on the issue of climate change right now. The Democrats believe we need to address climate change with bold and substantial action. We cannot wait until a later day. We cannot keep approving folks like McNamee to influence energy policy. We need to act. Meanwhile, too many of our Republican colleagues pretend the issue doesn't even exist, and that is sad.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.