

what they need. They need a lot of resources, the very last of which would be a wall.

Let's recall, before the holidays, the President said he would sign a continuing resolution through February 8. We had a path forward. We all relied on the President's word. After 24 hours of FOX News and rightwing pundits criticizing him, the President's ego was so bruised he reversed course and broke his word. Here we are, 13 days into a Trump shutdown.

It has to end. We have a clear, sensible, responsible path forward. I strongly urge the Senate Republicans to support and pass this bipartisan compromise. After all, almost every Republican and every Democrat has voted for these bills. Let's vote for them again and tell the President we will work on what is needed for border security. We all agree on the need for border security. Let's work on what is the best way forward, but let's not close down the Department of Agriculture. Let's not close down all these other Departments that American taxpayers rely on.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. COLLINS). The Senator from Texas is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, the first order of business for the 116th Congress is to finish the business of the 115th Congress, just concluded. As we all know, one of the most important responsibilities of Congress is to fund the vital services provided by our government and in so doing provide paychecks to the hard-working public servants who keep the cogs of government turning.

While, as the distinguished Senator from Vermont recognized, we were successful in a bipartisan way to pass 75 percent of those funding bills, we know the remaining 25 percent is being held hostage over the issue of border security. That equates to hundreds of thousands of Federal workers and their families who don't know how or if they can make their rent this month or buy groceries or keep the lights on. They simply don't know when that next paycheck will be deposited in their bank account or how long the standoff will last. That is unfair, and it is unacceptable collateral damage.

It is our collective responsibility to fund the remaining seven Departments and Agencies and to do so soon. Unfortunately, over the holidays, not much progress seems to have been made. Really, what it amounts to is a debate over semantics: Is it a fence? Is it a wall? Is it border security? What is it? The semantic debate has led us to a partial government shutdown, now 13 days in and without a clear end in sight. We know Washington, DC, where the blame game is a world-class sport, where everybody is on the battlefield pointing fingers of blame any way they can.

Later, the House Democrats will consider a wholly unserious proposal that funds the remaining portions of government without a significant investment in border security. I believe that is a nonstarter. They know it, and we know it. The President won't sign it, and so the majority leader has said it will not be considered here in the Senate.

My constituents, as well as the Presiding Officer's constituents in Maine and Americans living in Tennessee, are not interested in show votes; they want real border security—something our Democratic colleagues used to support and have voted for time and again. But the debate has somehow shifted from “How do we solve this problem?” to “Who is going to win?” No longer is it a search for solutions; it is about embarrassing your political opponent and scoring points.

Yesterday on CNN, Alexandra Pelosi, the daughter of incoming Speaker NANCY PELOSI, made a comment about her mother's leadership style. She said: “She'll cut your head off and you don't even know that you are bleeding.” Kind of shocking comments coming from a daughter. It is not something I necessarily would consider a compliment, but the left appears to believe that it is a commendable trait, and they are eager to hand her the Speaker's gavel.

It seems the desire to cultivate a reputation for ruthlessness—win at all costs—has replaced an appetite to actually get things done. Rather than working with those with whom we occasionally disagree, Members are resorting to guerilla warfare—almost literally the law of the jungle. This practice is not only unproductive, it prevents us from securing the border and getting those workers impacted by this partial shutdown back to work.

Of course we know what it is going to take. It is going to take a negotiated agreement between the parties—between the Houses of Congress and the President. It is a challenging task, but it is not impossible. In fact, we have done it often.

My friends, contrary to what you have seen in the news or may read on social media, bipartisanship is not an antiquated or quaint idea, and you don't have to look very far back to see how we have been able to make bipartisanship work for the benefit of the American people. The 115th Congress was marked by major bipartisan accomplishments.

Just 2 weeks ago, the President signed legislation to overhaul our criminal justice system. This bill was a result of a lot of hard work and tough negotiations between Democrats and Republicans on both ends of the Capitol, as well as the leadership at the White House. Bipartisan work has allowed us to pass bills to tackle the substance abuse epidemic in this country, which claimed more than 70,000 lives last year alone. It has allowed us to fight human trafficking together and

to reduce gun violence and other violent crime. Together, we have supported America's military and delivered reforms to veterans' benefits and provided a pay raise to our troops. We reauthorized the Federal Aviation Administration, modernizing airport security for the air-traveling public. We eliminated the gag clause to ensure drug price transparency. Those are just a few of the things we have done together in a bipartisan way.

Working with those you disagree with isn't something to be ashamed of—it is actually how we turn good ideas into good laws and in so doing, govern.

I am glad to see him on the floor because I was going to mention the great example from our friend from Tennessee, Senator ALEXANDER, who wrote an op-ed in the Washington Post today about the importance of finding common ground. He gave an object lesson of how working together on very potentially polarizing legislation can be accomplished in a way that produces a result from which the American people benefit. Of course, that was a lesson he said he learned from negotiating with President Obama while working on the Every Student Succeeds Act.

He wrote:

Why, as a Republican, did I agree to a Democratic president's request with which I did not concur? Because I have read the Constitution, and I understand that if the President doesn't sign legislation, it does not become law.

Well, regardless of which party controls the Senate or the House or occupies the White House, that remains a constant. It is the distilled essence of our constitutional system. Democrats in the House should take our colleague's wise words to heart and return to the negotiating table with the President.

I believe there are a lot more productive ways to spend our time in Congress than ruthlessly attempting to annihilate our political opponents—people we disagree with. We can, we have, and we should strive to do better. So it is time to wash off the war paint. We know how to solve problems when we want to, and as we begin a new Congress, I urge all of our colleagues, both Republican and Democratic, to stop trying to score political points and start being productive and in so doing, govern.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I appreciate the comments of the distinguished senior Senator from Texas. I am glad to know that at least one person read my article in the Washington Post this morning, and I appreciate his mentioning it.

I think we should be blunt about this. There is never an excuse for a shutdown of the federal government. There