

to help bridge this gap? They all just kind of laughed. It wasn't a happy laugh. It was a cynical laugh, like, where do you expect us to go to work when the establishments we might go to, whether it is a restaurant or some small business, is posting things on Facebook, saying that we need customers? Do you think they are going to hire people? That is not happening in a community like this.

Further, they don't know how long they may be there. If it requires some level of training and you can't commit and you say: Well, if the government gets back to business, maybe, just maybe, I don't need to be here—well, you are not going to be investing in that individual. So you have that stressor.

The stress I think our families see—and I have such respect for the men and women who are staying at home while our Active are serving, whether they are helping pluck fishermen out of the sea in the north or whether they are interdicting drugs in the southern waters—spouses have learned how to hold things together and be tough, just figure it out. There is not a lot of complaining that is going on.

When you have a mom tell me, as she did yesterday, that the spending money the kids got for Christmas, they said: We are not going to spend it, Mom, because we think we might need it for food or when the 13-year-old girl says: I am not going to cash the birthday check I got from Grandma because we might need it—and I was reminded by several of these spouses that this is an adult problem. This is not a kids' problem. Our children should not have to be worrying about this, but they can't help but pick it up. They know what is going on, and they are worried. To have a mom tell me—one of the moms said: We are just doing everything to pull it together, so I am having to say things like: I am sorry. We are not going to be ordering the yearbook.

This is not paying for fancy sports programs even, it is: I don't know that we are going to be able to order the yearbook, and it is canceling tutors. It is making a difference in all of that.

I think, again, about the weight our spouses are bearing and how they are handling it.

One woman said: Hey, we are lucky. My husband is an avid hunter and a fisherman. We have a freezer full of meat. We have moose and salmon, but not everybody is so lucky here.

One woman said: I have made a complete inventory of everything I have in the pantry just so I know and I can be planning ahead.

This is hard on everyone.

The impact to enlistment is something we need to be thinking about, and that was raised repeatedly.

One woman said: My husband and I both joined the Coast Guard because we liked the stability that this offered us—maybe not stability insofar as moving around from location to location but stability in the fact that you

are a Federal employee. You are going to have that support from your government.

She said: You know, now, I don't think of this as a very stable opportunity.

Another thing I learned yesterday is that it was apparently just a week or so ago—maybe it was a couple of weeks ago—that the Coast Guard boot camp program where the new recruits come in was completed. Where did those young Coasties go who have the new shaved, good-looking tops? They went back home. They sent them back home because they don't have any place for them to go. What do you think that does to recruitment?

Another issue that came up that was fascinating to me that we don't think about in this land of unintended consequences when there is a partial government shutdown that goes on for 29 days—these Coast Guard men and women—Federal employees—when they do official travel, it goes on an official card. That card is issued in your name. So if you are the Coast Guard member who needs to go out and inspect a boat in Dutch Harbor and you are based out of Anchorage, a flight to Dutch Harbor roundtrip, last I checked, is close to \$1,000. That goes on the card. The way the process works is that you are reimbursed on your government card, but during this shutdown, none of these expenses are being reimbursed. That card is tied to your name, tied to your credit rating. That was where the conversation really got lively. The spouses were talking about, do you know what happens to us when the credit rating goes south? Do you know what that means in terms of our ability to have a security clearance? Do you know what that means in terms of our ability to transfer?

It would be one thing if you could say: Oh well, I will just pay for it out of my savings.

That was what another spouse said to me. She said: You know, I really take offense because I feel there are a lot of people out there who place judgment on us because they say "You should have saved for something like this." The response is "I am in the Coast Guard. I move around."

Many of these families have invested in a home, and when they are transferred, they keep that home. They try to make some money off of it. Many of them rent to another Coast Guard family. Now that family is not getting paid either. The stress compiled upon stress is just awful.

We were reminded that this is not a natural disaster; this is a manmade disaster.

Another woman said: The military are proud. They should be honored and respected.

One really summed it up from the Coast Guard's view, in my opinion. She said: We are not going to sink. We are not going to sink. We will still float, but that doesn't mean that we are not upset and we are not angry.

They shared these stories with a great deal of respect but were truly begging for us to resolve these issues. They all understand that there is this effort out there to pay the Active-Duty and military Coast Guard, but there are Coast Guard families on this base, and there are Active Coast Guard working side by side with the civilians, helping them keep those boats in tip-top shape, keeping the helicopters in the air, keeping the C-130s in the air. They are all working together. So how is it right that side by side, oftentimes sharing the same job, that one would get pay and the others would not? So they have said: Don't forget the civilian side as well.

I want to end my comments because I know the Senator from Virginia would like to speak as well.

I have a soft spot in my heart for Kodiak. I think that is because I myself am a Coast Guard kid. When I go to Kodiak, the gathering place in Kodiak is a great little brewery called Kodiak Brewery. It is a gathering place for not only the politicians who come to town but all the Coasties. The community comes together. This is where birthdays take place. This is where you come and have a beer after work.

This is an online post from yesterday. It says:

This is a sad empty brewery. We're lonely and you're thirsty, and we want to support our community in a time of need. We're doing a "shutdown" sale: \$1 off servings until sanity prevails! Hopefully we all get through this!

There is not a soul in the place. It is just a reminder of the extraordinary ripple effect. When you say it is just the Federal employees, first of all, I think that is offensive because our Federal employees do extraordinary service for our country. It affects all of us, and it is up to all of us to get this resolved.

I have been so disappointed this week that we have not been able to advance a more positive solution, to work on an immediate outcome to help with this, but my frustration is nothing compared to these families—these men and women who are serving, those who are staying at home—the worry, angst, and stress we see. We owe it to the people of Kodiak, we owe it to the people of this country to get this place working again.

With that, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. If the Senator from Virginia will withhold for just a moment.

Mr. WARNER. Yes, Madam President.

#### NATIONAL SCHOOL CHOICE WEEK

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 25, submitted earlier today.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 25) designating January 20 through January 26, 2019, as "National School Choice Week."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 25) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

#### MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 268

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the first time.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 268) making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I now ask unanimous consent for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bill will receive its second reading on the next legislative day.

#### ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that following the remarks of Senator WARNER, the Senate stand adjourned under the previous order.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

#### GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, let me thank the Senator from Alaska for her comments and my dear friend from Virginia for his comments. I am going to somewhat echo what has already been said, but what I don't understand—and for those who are listening or viewing, the four of us and many others on both sides of the aisle have been working in good faith to try to say: How do we get out of this?

The question I have is—I wonder if all of our colleagues have actually gone out and sat with Federal workers or folks who are affected. How could anyone sit with anyone who is affected by this self-imposed personal, financial, and economic disaster and not say: Let's not talk about money; let's

get the government reopened. We can figure this out, but let's get this government reopened.

I will recount some similar stories, and I appreciated the Alaska stories of the Coast Guard in Kodiak. In Virginia, we have a major Coast Guard facility down at Hampton Roads. But, as the Senator from Alaska has mentioned, it is not just Federal employees; it is contractors and private businesses and a host of other folks.

The Presiding Officer is part of the group who has been trying to say: How do we get to yes? How do we get to reopen?

Maybe we can renew our efforts and urge all of our colleagues. Many of them have gone home, but I hope they will sit down and have these kinds of sessions.

I don't know how anybody can look at people who are out of work and without pay due to nothing they have done individually and not say that no matter who is winning the inside-the-beltway battle of the day, we owe it to them to get this government reopened.

Madam President, I rise today out of deep frustration with the administration's treatment of Federal workers during this government shutdown. I will come back to this again, but I wish—I wish there were some indication that the President, the Vice President, or any of his top advisers would actually go out and do a listening session with Federal workers. That doesn't seem to be too much to ask. I want them to look those Coast Guard spouses or those TSA employees or those air traffic controllers in the eye and tell them why they are being held hostage on an issue that, frankly, has nothing to do with their work as public servants.

We are now on day 29 of what I call the President's shutdown—the longest shutdown in U.S. history. In many ways, we are creating the legacy of this administration, a legacy that—the President claimed in mid-December that he was "proud" to have initiated the shutdown that is plunging so many Americans' lives into chaos.

More than 800,000 Federal workers have missed a paycheck, and that number, I think the Senator from Alaska has alluded to and the Senator from Virginia has alluded to, is actually a fraction of the folks who are actually being affected. That doesn't count the countless contractors—I will come back to that in a moment—or the host of businesses, like the brewery in Kodiak. They are not Federal workers. They are absolutely being affected, and let's recognize that. Even when we are reopened and those Coast Guard workers are paid back, that brewery is never going to make back its lost revenue.

The President has found time for an Oval Office address, he has found time for a trip to the border, and he has found time for a tit-for-tat with Speaker PELOSI, but what he has not found time for—or, for that matter, anybody else in the White House—is to sit down

with the Federal workers who are being affected, and I believe that is a national disgrace.

Again, I appreciate the Presiding Officer and your colleagues listening. I know you have made efforts, and you are continuing to work with other colleagues on both sides of the aisle to try to hopefully find some sense in this disaster, but the truth is, people's time is running out.

Over the last couple weeks, Senator KAINE and I have heard from so many Virginia families who are shouldering the burden from this shutdown. I wanted to share some of the stories.

The Senator from Alaska told a story about a 13-year-old who couldn't cash a Christmas check. At least for me—I can't speak for Senator KAINE—the most compelling story, heartbreaking story—and I am going to tell a number of them, but this is the one I have kept coming back to. Senator KAINE and I, with the press, had a series of Federal workers tell their stories. One of the Federal workers didn't want to come and do it on camera, but he came up and talked to Senator KAINE and me afterward. He was a relatively young guy, about 35. He was a veteran. He was an air traffic controller. He has now gone 4-plus weeks without a paycheck. His wife had served in the Air Force in an intel capacity and was suffering from pretty significant PTSD. Because he hadn't had a paycheck, he couldn't pay the \$90 copayment for his wife to continue to see her psychiatrist and continue to pay for her drug treatment. Not unlike the story the Senator from Alaska told, he said he has his wife to take care of and their two kids, a 4- and 5-year-old. The 4- and 5-year-old kids came to their parents and brought their piggy banks and said: Mom and dad, can we give you what we have in our piggy banks to help our family?

This is the United States of America. These are two veterans. We say we honor their service. This is somebody who is still going to work and working overtime without pay to keep our air safe. This shouldn't be.

A few days earlier, we met with other workers. A young father whom we met works with the Department of Justice. He brought his 7-week-old daughter to this session. He said when his daughter was born, he wanted to make sure he could get his daughter on his Federal insurance plan. That is his right. But the person who was supposed to submit the form to the insurance company had been furloughed. He went to the doctor and his infant daughter had an illness and had to get a prescription. He didn't have the money to pay for the prescription, and his daughter wasn't registered on his insurance company, not because of any fault he had made. He wasn't able to pay for the insurance. In this case, thank God, the insurance company actually worked with him, and they brought extra proof and went through other hoops, and he was able to get the medicine. How many other