

takes today's challenges seriously. We take our commitments seriously. And we take our defense seriously.

So especially in light of current events, I was incredulous to hear the Democratic leader call yesterday to postpone moving forward with the NDAA. Apparently, some of our Democratic friends need to go hit the Presidential campaign trail. They can't be here because they have to go campaign for not 1 day but 2 this week. They are too busy to stay in the Senate and authorize the resources that our All-Volunteer Armed Forces rely on. Postpone legislation on our national defense to accommodate the Presidential race in the middle of this ongoing crisis overseas? Come on. Come on.

I am sorry our Democratic friends feel compelled to skip out so they can compete for the favor of "the resistance." The rest of us, the Republican majority—we are going to be right here. We are going to be right here working and voting to make America stronger and safer.

Of course, the NDAA does not exhaust the urgent priorities we should attend to this week. As my Republican colleagues and I have been arguing for 2 months now—2 months—Congress must address the humanitarian crisis down on the southern border. The situation is well documented. Nobody is in doubt.

For months, record numbers of people have arrived at the border, overwhelming—completely overwhelming agencies and facilities. The Department of Homeland Security has had to redirect resources and personnel from other critical missions to assist the Border Patrol. The Secretary of Health and Human Services has said: "We are running out of money." This is the Secretary of Health and Human Services. "We are functionally out of space."

I was encouraged last week when badly needed emergency funding finally garnered some momentum. Under the leadership of Chairman SHELBY and Senator LEAHY, the Appropriations Committee approved funding 30 to 1. That is about as close to bipartisan as it could ever get.

There is no reason, no excuse, why this noncontroversial measure should not get a similar, overwhelmingly bipartisan vote here on the floor this week—this week, not some other time. Actually, there is no reason it shouldn't happen today. Partisan delays have exacerbated this crisis long enough. It is well past time my Democratic colleagues stop standing in the way and let the Senate get this done.

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.

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

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

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.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1790, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1790) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2020 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McConnell (for Inhofe) Modified Amendment No. 764, in the nature of a substitute.

A motion was entered to close further debate on McConnell (for Inhofe) Modified Amendment No. 764 (listed above), and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Wednesday, June 26, 2019.

McConnell (for Romney) Amendment No. 861 (to Amendment No. 764), to provide that funds authorized by the Act are available for the defense of the Armed Forces and United States citizens against attack by foreign hostile forces.

McConnell Amendment No. 862 (to Amendment No. 861), to change the enactment date.

McConnell Amendment No. 863 (to the language proposed to be stricken by Amendment No. 764), to change the enactment date.

McConnell Amendment No. 864 (to Amendment No. 863), of a perfecting nature.

A motion was entered to close further debate on the bill, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of McConnell (for Inhofe) Modified Amendment No. 764.

McConnell motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Armed Services, with instructions, McConnell Amendment No. 865, to change the enactment date.

McConnell Amendment No. 866 (to the instructions) Amendment No. 865), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell Amendment No. 867 (to Amendment No. 866), of a perfecting nature.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

9/11 VICTIM COMPENSATION FUND

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, before I begin, I just heard the leader conclude his remarks. He didn't mention the fact today that he is meeting with several constituents of mine from New York, including John Feal and other 9/11 first responders, to discuss a solution to the shortfall in the Victim Compensation Fund.

I am glad the leader has agreed to meet with them. It is a good thing, but

it is not enough to have just a meeting. These brave men and women who selflessly rushed to the towers in the midst of danger, when no one knew what would come next, deserve a commitment that their bill will be considered in a timely manner here on the floor.

So, again, I urge Leader MCCONNELL to listen to the 9/11 first responders. Then give them your commitment, Leader MCCONNELL, that you will put their bill on the Senate floor as soon as it passes the House as a standalone bill. It will pass the House; it will certainly pass the Senate, given the cosponsorship; and the President will sign it. The families of those who, just like our soldiers, rushed to danger to protect our safety can breathe a sigh of relief.

Leader MCCONNELL is the one person—this is not a dual responsibility—I wish it were, at least when we are in the minority, but Leader MCCONNELL is the one person who controls the calendar on the Senate floor. He can stand in the way, as he has done before, or he can do the right thing and commit to give this bill the attention it deserves. I will be eagerly waiting to hear what the leader says after he meets with the first responders this afternoon.

IRAN

Madam President, on Iran and the NDAA, ever since President Trump unilaterally decided to abandon the Iran nuclear agreement, our two countries have been on a path toward greater conflict. In the past month, Iran has heightened its aggressive actions in the region, prompting responses from the U.S. Government. No one looks at Iran through rose-colored glasses. That is why Americans, myself included, are worried about the current course of events. Escalation happens quickly in the Middle East. Without a steady hand at the helm, without a coherent plan or strategy—things this President has lacked since the moment he took office—the danger of stumbling into war is acute.

Democrats have been urging Leader MCCONNELL to allow us a vote on an amendment to the NDAA concerning a possible conflict with Iran. We have an amendment, led by Senators UDALL, MERKLEY, MURPHY, and KAINE—cosponsored by Republican Senators PAUL and LEE—that would prohibit any funds authorized by the current NDAA to be used to conduct hostilities against the Government of Iran.

Again, this is a dangerous situation. Even if the President doesn't intend war, his erratic, inconsistent, and off-the-cuff policies could lead us to stumble into war. When we are at war, it doesn't matter how we got there. The loss of life and the loss of treasure, when we need so much attention here in America, is very real.

So we have an amendment, and we are urging Leader MCCONNELL to allow us a simple vote on an amendment to the NDAA concerning a possible conflict with Iran.