

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 55.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of John Milton Younge, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of John Milton Younge, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Kevin Cramer, John Hoeven, Rob Portman, Dan Sullivan, Chuck Grassley, Richard Burr, John Thune, Roy Blunt.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 344.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Mary S. McElroy, of Rhode Island, to be United States District Judge for the District of Rhode Island.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Mary S. McElroy, of Rhode Island, to be United States District Judge for the District of Rhode Island.

Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Kevin Cramer, John Hoeven, Rob Portman, Dan Sullivan, Chuck Grassley, Richard Burr, John Thune, Roy Blunt.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 346.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Stephanie A. Gallagher, of Maryland, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Stephanie A. Gallagher, of Maryland, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland.

Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Kevin Cramer, John Hoeven, Rob Portman, Dan Sullivan, Chuck Grassley, Richard Burr, John Thune, Roy Blunt.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 351.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Mary M. Rowland, of Illinois, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Mary M. Rowland, of Illinois, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois.

Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Kevin Cramer, John Hoeven, Rob Portman, Dan Sullivan, Chuck Grassley, Richard Burr, John Thune, Roy Blunt.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions be waived.

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

The Senator from Massachusetts.

MUELLER REPORT

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, yesterday the American people finally heard at length directly from Special Counsel Robert Mueller. In his testimony before the House Judiciary Committee and the Intelligence Committee, the special counsel gave voice to his report on Russian interference in our 2016 Presidential election and President Trump's obstruction of the investigation into it.

What the American people and I heard from Special Counsel Mueller was an explanation and confirmation of the deeply troubling findings and conclusions of his investigation and his written report. He told us that the Trump campaign welcomed the help of a hostile foreign power, Russia, to influence our 2016 election, accepted that help, lied repeatedly about it, and benefited from it.

He confirmed that there was voluminous evidence that President Trump had obstructed justice through his efforts to interfere with and impede the special counsel's investigation. Most importantly, contrary to the President's claims, the special counsel confirmed that his investigation had not exonerated the President of the crime of obstruction of justice. When asked, Robert Mueller made this crystal clear,

testifying that “the President was not exculpated for the acts that he allegedly committed.”

In his testimony yesterday, Special Counsel Mueller did not back away from any of his written report's findings. The American people saw and heard him emphatically defend them.

Special Counsel Mueller, a decorated war hero, gave every single American cause for deep alarm when he called Russian interference in support of the Trump campaign “among the most serious challenges” to American democracy that he had ever seen.

He agreed that it was “unpatriotic” and “wrong” to seek campaign help from a foreign power, and he decried President Trump's failure to acknowledge or respond to the systematic and sweeping Russian interference, warning: “They're doing it as we sit here.”

Yesterday, Donald Trump tried to defend himself in tweets while Robert Mueller defended our democracy with his testimony.

The special counsel's testimony and events of the past few weeks have led to the undeniable conclusion that it is time for the House of Representatives to begin a formal impeachment proceeding against President Trump.

I stand here today on the Senate floor, the place where an unprecedented trial would occur, understanding the gravity of this moment in our Nation's history. I stand here today because I believe we have reached the moment where we must stand up for the survival of our democracy.

Before I came to this decision, I said that I needed to hear directly from Special Counsel Mueller and other witnesses, that Congress needed to obtain documents, and that we needed to gather all the facts and evidence.

I had hoped that the House Judiciary Committee's investigation would get us answers to the questions about the President's obstructive conduct that remained after Special Counsel Mueller issued his report. I had hoped that the President, who continues to insist that he did nothing wrong, would cooperate and that the House Judiciary Committee would receive testimony and other evidence from the Trump campaign and Trump administration witnesses. That has not happened, and that is because of continued and deliberate Presidential obstruction.

Just listen to the numerous roadblocks that the President has put in Congress's way since Special Counsel Mueller issued his report in March. President Trump has denied the entire Congress access to the full and unredacted version of the Mueller report and its underlying materials.

President Trump has claimed that key witnesses, like former White House Counsel Donald McGahn and former White House Communications Director Hope Hicks, are immune from testifying or simply don't have to comply with congressional subpoenas.

President Trump has opposed testimony from two of the special counsel's

top deputies and restricted the scope of the Mueller testimony, and President Trump has vowed to fight any future congressional subpoenas.

What we have seen from President Trump is a pattern of repeated and baseless defiance of the House's constitutional authority to investigate, especially subpoenas seeking evidence that the President obstructed justice and abused his power.

The President has engaged in stonewalling that shows an unprecedented disregard and contempt for a coequal branch of government under our Constitution—disregard and contempt that would make Richard Nixon blush with envy.

Taken together, Special Counsel Robert Mueller's testimony and the President's obstruction of the congressional investigation compel us to immediately begin a formal impeachment inquiry.

I do not come to this decision lightly. An impeachment proceeding against the President of the United States is a matter of the highest constitutional magnitude, but when the evidence demonstrates that the President of the United States obstructed the special counsel's investigation and when the facts and the evidence demonstrate that the President of the United States is continuing to obstruct justice, seeking to derail a legitimate congressional investigation into the lawfulness of his conduct while in office, then Congress must do its constitutional duty and act.

The acts of obstruction that Special Counsel Mueller described in his report and in his testimony yesterday to Congress are impeachable offenses—a view shared by myriad constitutional scholars, attorneys, and prosecutors.

The President improperly pressed then-FBI Director James Comey to drop the investigation of former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn and, subsequently, fired Comey because of the Russia investigation—confirmed yesterday by the special counsel's testimony.

The President unlawfully demanded that then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions reverse his recusal from the Russia investigation and take over the investigation—confirmed yesterday by the special counsel's testimony.

The President engaged in witness tampering and falsification of government records when he directed White House Counsel Don McGahn to fire Robert Mueller and later pressured McGahn to deny that it had happened—confirmed yesterday by the special counsel's testimony.

The President engaged in a coverup when he sought to prevent public disclosure of evidence about the infamous June 9, 2016, Trump Tower meeting—confirmed yesterday by the special counsel's testimony.

The President abused his constitutional authority by holding out the prospect of pardons in exchange for witnesses' silence—confirmed yesterday by the special counsel's testimony.

That Robert Mueller found so much evidence that this President committed impeachable offenses might be shocking, but it should not be surprising. After all, look at what we have learned about this President during his 2½ years in office, what he is willing to say and what he is willing to do.

Did an American President put family members in high-level White House policy positions—positions requiring security clearances that should never have been issued? Yes, he did.

Did an American President repeatedly show infatuation with and express sympathy for authoritarian figures around the globe, most notably Vladimir Putin, the man who interfered with the 2016 election to President Trump's benefit? Yes, he did.

Did an American President face multiple, repeated, and credible allegations of sexual assault by more than a dozen women—sexual assault that he bragged about on tape? Yes, he did.

Did an American President become known as individual No. 1, in effect an unindicted coconspirator on charges of Federal campaign finance law violations that were brought against his lawyer, Michael Cohen, in New York? Yes, he did.

Did an American President seek to divide Americans based on race, religion, and ethnicity, directing racist language at elected Members of Congress and urging others to celebrate that hate? Sadly, yes, he did.

We have watched as Donald Trump has given the Constitution a stress test, the likes of which we haven't seen in 230 years. We have watched him attack judges and seek to intimidate the judiciary.

We have watched him disregard Congress's coequal role in government under article I of the Constitution, whether by spending unappropriated money on his border wall, relying on “acting” government officials to eviscerate the Senate's advice and consent function, or ignoring legitimate oversight requests.

We have watched the President sue Congress in order to block release of his tax returns and refuse to disclose any meaningful information about his business operations, especially sources of foreign investment and loans, raising alarming questions about violations of the Constitution's emoluments clause.

This President relishes attacking the freedom of the press and has incited violence against journalists for exercising their First Amendment rights.

Donald Trump is tearing at the fabric of our democracy, literally, every single day. And yesterday, the Congress and the American people heard the facts and evidence that Congress can and should act to hold him accountable.

In the face of impeachable offenses, it is the Constitution that entrusts the Congress with the responsibility of deciding whether to remove a President of the United States from office for

high crimes and misdemeanors. Indeed, in the face of evidence of serious and persistent misconduct that is harmful to the Nation, Congress would be abusing its constitutional discretion and setting a dangerous precedent if it did not begin an impeachment inquiry.

If the evidence of obstruction of justice and other wrongdoing that Robert Mueller explained yesterday is not evidence of impeachable offenses, what is? What damage would a future President have to inflict in order to trigger an impeachment inquiry?

I have no illusions about where an impeachment inquiry will lead. My Republican colleagues have thus far shown themselves unwilling to hold this President accountable. They believe that everything is “all over.” But the evidence in the Mueller report and the special counsel’s testimony yesterday explaining it, defending it, and reaffirming it compel us to do what is right and what is necessary, and that is to exercise our authority and begin an impeachment proceeding against Donald Trump. Nothing less than our democracy is at stake. I call upon my colleagues in the House of Representatives to do so.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

BUDGET AGREEMENT

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I have one message for my colleagues in the Senate and those who might be watching. It is about this chart, which is very simple. This is the line of what we call discretionary spending. This is about 31 percent of the budget. That is the budget agreement you have read about in the newspapers the last couple of days. That is what we are talking about.

It is a blue line. It has to do with paying for our national defense, so it is about half of the dollars; then for our national parks, America’s best idea; then for the National Institutes of Health, the source of medical miracles ranging from restoring your heart to curing Zika to the National Laboratories, which are the sources of our competition with the rest of the world. That is what this money is for.

What the blue line recognizes is that for the last 10 years, the growth in spending for national defense, national parks, the National Institutes of Health, and National Labs has gone up at about the rate of inflation, and for the next 10 years, including the budget agreement that the President and the congressional leaders recommended this week, it will go at about the rate of inflation.

The point is, for 20 years—2008 to 2029—the increase in spending for the amount of money we are talking about and for the type of spending in the budget agreement is not the source of the Federal deficit. What is? Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and interest—that is the red line that 10 years ago was \$1.8 trillion. At the rate we are going, it will be \$5.4 trillion in 10 years.

That is not the type of spending we are talking about in the budget agreement.

My message today is in support of properly funding national defense, national parks, National Institutes of Health, and National Labs and not beating our chest and pretending that we are balancing the budget on the backs of our soldiers, our medical miracles, and our national parks when, in fact, it is the entitlements that the President and the Democrats and the Republicans in Congress need to address.

I will talk about the blue line today. I have talked about the red line plenty before. Former Senator Corker and I introduced legislation a few years ago that would have reduced the growth of this red line by \$1 trillion over 10 years. The only problem was, we were the only two cosponsors of the legislation.

The budget deficit is vitally damaging to our country, but the budget agreement that President Trump recommended is not the source of the budget deficit. That part of the budget is under control. That is 31 percent of all the dollars we spend in the United States. Just add to that, if this continues for another 10 years, this blue line—national defense, national parks, National Institutes of Health, National Laboratories—is going to go from 31 percent of the budget to 22 percent of the budget, and mandatory spending is going up to 78 percent. This is the budget deficit. This is the budget agreement we are going to be voting on next week. That part of the budget is under control.

Here is what the budget agreement, which the President recommended and our Democratic and Republican leaders in the House and Senate have recommended and which I strongly support, does. The first thing it does is suspend the debt limit—the amount we can borrow. If we don’t do that, we have a global fiscal crisis. We all know that, so we need to do it.

Second, it raises the defense and non-defense discretionary budget caps. That is this blue line down here. That is the amount of money we can spend, as I said, on national defense. That is about half of the spending—and then our veterans, National Labs, biomedical research, and national parks.

Let’s talk about the military for just a minute. Former Secretary of Defense James Mattis, who had enormous respect here in Congress, said that “no enemy in the field has done as much harm to the readiness of the U.S. military than the combined impact of the Budget Control Act’s defense spending caps, worsened by operating for 10 of the last 11 years under continuing resolutions of varied and unpredictable duration.”

In plain English, what that means is that because of the President’s leadership and the recommendations of our bipartisan leaders, we will avoid what Secretary Mattis said has been so damaging to our military.

Here is what happened. Back in 2011, we passed the Budget Control Act to try to limit this part of the budget. That came after a special committee was appointed, which everyone hoped would deal with this part of the budget—the problem part, the part that is causing the deficit.

The Budget Control Act came up with a formula that everybody thought would work. They said: Well, if we put in there that we will have dramatic reductions in military spending, Congress will never do that, so they will be forced to finally do something we all should have had the courage to do a long time ago, and that is deal with entitlements.

What happened? We didn’t deal with the red line, and we cut the military. We cut the military badly over the last 10 years, and we are just now beginning to catch up. Last year, Congress avoided sequestration and increased discretionary spending for fiscal years 2018 and 2019.

Let me say it again, because I am going to repeat it over and over and over: We increased spending last year at about the rate of inflation. That is not the cause of the Federal deficit. Reaching that agreement, though, meant that for the first time in nearly a decade the Department of Defense received its budget on time, and it received a record funding level for research and development.

This new 2-year budget agreement that the President has recommended will rebuild our military by providing \$738 billion for defense discretionary spending for 2020 and \$740 billion for 2021.

It will also allow us to fulfill the commitment we made as a part of the New START Treaty in 2010 in December. I voted for that, and part of the deal with President Obama was that if we passed the treaty limiting nuclear weapons, we would make sure that ours worked. President Trump said the other day that Russia has 1,111 nuclear weapons, and they all work. We don’t want them to use them, and the best way to keep them from using them is to make sure ours work.

We have reached a budget agreement so that we can get to work on the appropriations bills and hopefully get many of them done before the end of the fiscal year, which is the 30th of September. That is important to the military especially.

When I met with Secretary of the Army Mark Esper, who was approved by a big vote yesterday as Secretary of Defense, we talked about what it meant to have an appropriations bill passed into law on time, instead of a so-called continuing resolution, which is just a lazy way to go. It just says to spend next year what you spent last year, which means we don’t spend for the things we need to spend, and we don’t stop spending on the things we shouldn’t spend.

Here are some of the benefits of passing the appropriations bill on time,

which would mean October 1. It keeps large projects on time and on budget. That is true in the Defense Department, and it is also true other places. We have a big project called the Uranium Processing Facility at Oak Ridge, TN, which comes through the Energy and Water Appropriations Committee, which I chair, and Senator FEINSTEIN is the ranking member. We made sure that is on time and on budget—\$6.5 billion by 2025. But if we don't appropriate the money on time and on budget, we can't finish the project on time and on budget, and who is hurt by that? Our national defense and our taxpayers or the Chickamauga Lock in Tennessee.

All of the Army Corps of Engineers leaders have told me: Don't start these projects and then stop them. Don't stop and start and stop and start. That wastes money and slows things down.

So, for the last several years, we have continued steady reconstruction. We need to pass these on time and on budget.

Also, it keeps equipment maintenance at the Department of Defense on schedule. That saves money. There is more research and development for new technologies. It speeds up modernization of current equipment and keeps military training on schedule. That means soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines are properly prepared for prompt combat, and it prevents accidents.

This new 2-year agreement also helps our veterans. In 2018, President Trump signed the VA MISSION Act, which the Senate passed by a vote of 92 to 5. The MISSION Act gave veterans the ability to seek medical care outside the Department of Veterans Affairs and see a private doctor closer to home. So if you are 60 miles away in the State of Nebraska or Kansas or Tennessee and you need medical care and you can't be seen at a VA facility, you can see a private doctor close to home. This budget agreement makes sure we have enough money to support that, and I will ask the staff here how much that is.

Senator PERDUE said yesterday that 40 percent of the increase in the spending in this budget agreement, on the discretionary side, is to help veterans with the Choice Program. So it is not even in the national defense part of the budget; it is in the nondefense part of the budget. It helps veterans. So 40 percent of this increase is helping veterans on top of what we spend for defense, and we still keep the spending at about the rate of inflation. That is not the source of our budget deficit.

It is important for the American people to know that the Republican majority in Congress has worked together with Democrats to provide record levels of funding for science, research, and technology. In the Senate, Senator BLUNT from Missouri and Senator MURRAY from Washington State have provided the leadership for that in the Appropriations Committee.

In April 2016, Francis Collins, Director of the National Institutes of

Health, told our Appropriations Committee—I am a member of that, as are Senator DURBIN and others; we worked on this together—that with adequate and consistent funding, he can make 10 bold predictions about some of the medical miracles he expects over the next several years. He talked about regenerative medicine that would replace heart transplants by restoring your heart from your own cells. He talked about vaccines for Zika, for HIV/AIDS, and for the universal flu, which kills tens of thousands. He talked about an artificial pancreas. He talked about cures for Alzheimer's or at least medicines that would identify the symptoms—that would identify Alzheimer's before the symptoms and do something about it.

Since fiscal year 2015, the Appropriations Committee has increased funding for the National Institutes of Health by \$9 billion, or 30 percent. From \$30.3 billion in 2015 to \$39.34 billion in fiscal year 2019, Senator BLUNT and Senator MURRAY did that by cutting some programs and increasing the National Institutes of Health. They did it all down here in the blue line that stays within the rate of inflation—not up here in the red line. That is called good government.

I can't tell you the number of leaders of academic and research institutions I meet who say that the young investigators in our country are so encouraged by this new funding for biomedical research, and they are busy working on the next miracles. That is what consistent funding will do.

Dr. Collins came back to the committee this year, and I asked him if he was ready to update those bold predictions. He said: We are close to a cure for sickle cell anemia—sickle cell disease—and a new, nonaddictive painkiller which in my view would be the holy grail in our fight against opioids. With this new budget agreement, Congress could increase funding for the National Institutes of Health for the sixth consecutive year to continue this life-saving research and do it all within the blue line, which is not the cause of the Federal budget deficit.

Let's go to the Office of Science. Last year, the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee that I chair with the Senator from California, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the ranking Democrat, agreed, along with Congress, for the fourth consecutive year—and President Trump signed it—to provide record funding for the Department of Energy's Office of Science. With this new budget, we can do it for 5 years. What does this mean? This means funding for the 17 National Laboratories, including the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, which are America's secret weapon. No other country has anything like our National Laboratories. Many Americans worry about competition from China and other parts of the world. How do we meet that competition? Through innovation.

Where does that innovation come from? It is hard to think of a major ini-

tiative that has not come since World War II without some federally sponsored research funding. Funding our Labs is important and helps keep us first in the world in supercomputing. Why is supercomputing important? Because it keeps our standard of living high and keeps our national defense on its toes.

China knows that. Two years ago, China had the two top supercomputers, but today the United States has the two fastest supercomputers in the world and the Exascale computing project will deliver the next generation system starting in 2021. This accomplishment is not the result of 1 year of funding or one political party but 10 years of bipartisan effort through the Bush, Obama, and Trump administrations, Democratic and Republican, to try to make sure America is first in the world of supercomputing. We did it all under the blue line over the last 10 years. The funding went up at the rate of inflation, not through the Moon like in entitlements which is the source of the Federal budget deficit, not the money we spend to keep ahead of China and Japan in supercomputing.

On national parks, Ken Burns and others say America's national parks are our best idea. There are 417 of them. They have a badly deferred maintenance backlog. Senators PORTMAN, WARNER, KING, myself, and others are working with President Trump, who supports our legislation, to try to cut half of the deferred maintenance in the national park backlogs in the next 5 years. We are going to use money from energy on Federal lands to do that.

Americans are often shocked to find when they go to Federal parks that bathrooms don't work, roofs leak, and campgrounds are closed because there is not enough money for maintenance. This budget helps make sure our national parks are something Americans can continue to enjoy—all 418 of those parks—and we do that under the blue line that goes up at the rate of inflation, not at the budget-busting rate of the entitlements line.

I have said this over and over, and it needs to be said over and over. The red line is mandatory spending. The blue line is discretionary spending. The blue line will be \$1.6 trillion at the end of 10 more years. The red line will be \$5.4 trillion at the end of 10 more years. Ten years ago, the blue line was 1.1 and the red line was 1.8. What do you think the problem is for the source of the Federal budget? You don't need a Ph.D. in mathematics to figure this out. It is not this line. It is not national defense; it is not biomedical research; it is not supercomputing; it is not the Army Corps of Engineers. It is this one line—entitlements. It is our fault for not having dealt with it, but we shouldn't beat our chest and pretend to balance the budget by decimating the work on that blue line. Discretionary spending is only 31 percent of the money. Mandatory spending is the rest of the funding. It will increase from 69 percent of

total spending to 78 percent in 2029. The spending on national parks, national defense, National Institutes of Health, and National Labs will be reduced to 22 percent. I don't believe we can properly defend our country, properly keep up our parks, stay first in the world in supercomputing, and expect to continue biomedical research that produces lifesaving miracles if we squeeze all the money out of the blue line and let it go up in the air on the red line.

The United States is experiencing robust economic growth, and there is a lot of political talk in this Chamber but no one really disputes that. Our economy is growing and growing. We have not seen anything like it in a long time. There have been 6 million new jobs created just since President Trump was elected, with the lowest unemployment rate in 50 years, at 3.7 percent.

Before Congress passed the major tax reform in 31 years, our gross domestic product was projected to be a little less than 2 percent over the next 10 years. For the first quarter of 2019 this year, actual gross domestic product was a little over 3 percent. Higher GDP and lower unemployment leads to higher family incomes and more revenue for the Federal Government. More revenue for the Federal Government reduces the debt.

I urge my colleagues to support this 2-year budget agreement. To those who are worried about the Federal debt, I am worried about it too. That is why Senator Corker and I put our bill in to reduce by a growth of \$1 trillion over 10 years what is happening with this red line. If we want to talk about the Federal budget deficit, let's talk about where it really is. Let's talk about the red line, which has gone from \$1.8 trillion 10 years ago and is projected by the Congressional Budget Office to go to \$5.4 trillion 10 years from now.

Let's not pretend we are balancing the Federal budget by focusing on the part of the Federal budget that is under control, the part that funds our military, national parks, biomedical research, and National Labs. For the last 10 years, it has gone up at about the rate of inflation, and for the next 10 years, according to the Congressional Budget Office—including this 2-year budget agreement which only affects the blue line, not the red line—it goes up at the rate of inflation. So I am proud to support it. I believe it is the right thing to do, and when the House sends us a chance to vote for it next week, I hope it gets a big vote from the U.S. Senate.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, let me just take a few minutes here to share an idea that when we come back next week, we will be talking about the budget. We are going to be talking about making really difficult, very difficult decisions.

I would state that we on the Senate Armed Services Committee have an ad-

vantage over some of the other people because one of the critical areas in the budget coming up is how we treat the military. I think it is important for people to understand that if you are a member of the Armed Services Committee, you are in a position to know something the other Members don't know. It may sound like someone is not doing their job, but that is not true at all.

When you are on the Senate Armed Services Committee, there are hearings that take place. Starting in January, there are posture hearings. Posture hearings normally take about 6 hours a week. In posture hearings, we find out about matters that others just don't have time to find out about unless you are a member of the committee. If you are a member, you are sitting there for 3 hours a week.

I don't say this critically of the previous administration because—I would say, in the Obama administration, the top priority was not defending America. In fact, he established something called parity. Parity meant that for every one dollar put into the military budget, we have to put one dollar into the nonmilitary budget. That had never happened before, at least it had not happened since World War II. At that time, it was established that national defense would be our priority. Every Democrat and every Republican President at that time all the way up until the Obama administration had defending America as the top priority.

What happened during that administration was that we actually had a dramatic reduction. If you use constant dollars, that reduction took place between 2010 and 2015, using constant dollars. For this description, we used 2018 dollars. Going into 2010, it was about \$794 billion. Going into 2015, it was \$586 billion or something like that. So there was about a 25-percent reduction in the defense budget in a 5-year period. That had never happened before in the history of this country. Yet we suffered through, and we paid dearly for it.

A lot of people are not aware of it, unless you are on the Armed Services Committee because we see it. When the current President came in, President Trump, his budget boosted that back up. Now we are talking about real dollars, and it was \$700 billion in fiscal year 2018. Then for fiscal year 2019 it was \$716 billion.

Now we are getting into where we are today in the current budget. We passed a defense authorization bill, and in it we actually came out agreeing that we had to get to \$750 billion. Someone might ask why. We had something called the National Defense Commission report. It was a document that was a good document that talked about how we were going to need to appropriate because during the Obama administration we saw China and Russia become peer competitors in many areas. In fact, they ended up with some things better than ours. Let me give an example. Artillery during that period

of time for both China and Russia had us outranged and outgunned. How many people know that? People assume America has the best of everything. Well, that was true up until this time.

Air and defense, there were only two Active-Duty battalions with no new technological advancements. Nothing happened during that time. That allowed China and Russia to start creeping up and getting ahead of us.

On nuclear triad modernization, we had no modernization increases at that time, but Russia and China did. In fact, China actually has today a nuclear triad, and Russia is actually building one. The U.S. defense against electronic warfare—we didn't have that kind of a defense. With Russia, you can remember what happened in Ukraine.

Hypersonic weapons is the newest thing that people talk about. It is a type of weapon system that moves five times the speed of sound. It is the weapon system of the future. Prior to the past administration, prior to the Obama administration, we were ahead in our research on hypersonic weapons, but by the end of that time and up until this new administration came in, we were actually behind Russia and China. I only say that because we really took a hit.

The only time—we have had three opportunities, one in fiscal year 2018, one in fiscal year 2019, and then another on the budget we are going to be voting on this coming week. That was our opportunity to catch up.

I would just say this: If you are on the Armed Services Committee, you have an obligation because you are in a unique position of knowing the efficiencies that we have. Others don't have that. Many of the Members take the time and they find out that they can get this done.

But we are in a position where—General Dunford, as an example, said that we have lost our qualitative and our quantitative edge in artillery. We are actually outnumbered 5 to 1 by China and 10 to 1 by Russia. In air and missile defense, China and Russia have weapons that prevent access—we call them SAMs, surface-to-air missiles. Nuclear modernization—no real U.S. modernization took place during that time. We had some of our top people admitting that we had deficiencies, and we quickly tried to correct them.

Along came fiscal year 2018. In fiscal year 2018, we got back up to a \$700 billion budget, and we started working on things. We had the manual. It is a manual I normally bring down with me to the floor when we talk about this because this is something that everyone agreed on as the manual was put together. It was the NDS Commission report. It was put together by 6 Democrats and 6 Republicans—all experts in national defense—and everyone agreed that would be our blueprint to pull us out of where we were at that time, and it was working. We were on schedule to do it. We are currently on schedule with this budget.

It says that while we are rebuilding our military, we should be anticipating that we have to increase our military spending by between 3 percent and 5 percent over this period of time. That is a net increase. Well, the budget we came out with in the defense authorization bill was \$750 billion, and it was a budget that almost gets us there but not quite.

The President's budget agreement that came out the other day has a figure of \$738 billion. That is very close to where we are supposed to be. It is a 2-year budget, and that is a good thing for the military. Those of us on the Defense Committee understand that. So that brings that \$738 up to \$740.5 billion for 2021, so it is very close to the \$750 billion defense authorization.

I only say that because that makes it more important for anyone who is serving on the Senate Armed Services Committee to be in a position to know what I just said. And that is something that most people don't know, and I don't believe that most of the Members of this body know, but those who are on the committee do know it. We have to keep in mind that this budget is going to be the only way that we are going to be able to do what needs to be done.

This is the short version. I will come back and talk more this coming Monday and give a lot more details than I gave now. I will say this: I would encourage any member of the Senate Armed Services Committee to understand that they are in a position to know what the problem is, and a lot of other people do not know this. I would anticipate that members of the committee would be in that unique position to know and would be supporting a budget that gives us enough room to get back into position to recover from the losses that we took from the previous administration. That is what is at stake. That is what we are anticipating. I would anticipate that our members from the committee should be doing that.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNT). The Senator from Ohio.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I am on the floor this afternoon to talk about an issue that I have come to this floor other times to speak about, and that is the drug crisis we face in this country. In fact, I am told that over the last 3 years, I have now come to the floor 58 times to address this topic—to talk about the opioid crisis, talk about the new resurgence of crystal meth, and talk about what we can do about it.

I will tell you, during those 3 years, we made a lot of progress, not just in talking about this issue but doing something about it. We put new policies in place at the Federal level for better prevention, better treatment, better longer term recovery, and to also help our first responders—specifically, to give them access to this mir-

acle drug naloxone, which reverses the effect of overdose.

Congress passed legislation, like the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, the Cures legislation, and the STOP Act. We have provided actually more than \$4 billion of additional funding for these programs—particularly for treatment—over just the last few years. In Ohio alone, we have received \$140 million through CARA and Cures since they were signed into law. That money has gone toward innovative, evidence-based programs that are actually making a difference. We had to do this because this crisis has gripped our country in the worst drug epidemic ever. More people are now dying every year from overdoses from these drugs than died in the entire Vietnam conflict, as an example. We have never seen anything quite this bad, so we responded, as we should have, at the national level to a national crisis.

Working with States, localities, nonprofits, people out there in the trenches doing the hard work, we are beginning to make a difference. Last week, the Centers for Disease Control—CDC—issued a report with their latest statistics on overdose deaths. While drug overdose deaths are still way too high, they show we are actually seeing a reduction.

By the way, this is the first time we have seen a reduction in opioid overdose deaths in more than 8 years. Think about that. Every year for 8 years, we have seen increases in deaths, to the point that we had over 70,000 people a year dying of overdoses in 2017. In 2018—we now have the numbers in from CDC—it went from roughly 71,000 to roughly 68,000. Again, that is way too high. No one should be satisfied with that. But after increases every year, to have a 4-percent decrease nationally shows that we are beginning to turn the tide. Let's keep doing what we are doing. We cannot pull back now. If we do, it will just go back up again. Actually, it is the first time since 1990, I am told, that nationwide overdoses from any kind of drugs—opioids and other things—have decreased in a calendar year. That is the first time since 1990.

In Ohio, we did even better from 2017 to 2018. We had more than a 4-percent drop; we actually had a 22-percent drop in Ohio. That is partly because my home State has been ground zero for this. Like West Virginia, Kentucky, and other States, we have been hit really hard. To go 22 percent below where we were the previous year is progress, and we should be proud of that. Still, we are seeing overdose rates that are way too high. Overall, around the country, 33 States had reductions.

As I said earlier, the area where we made the most progress is in combating opioids, partly because of legislation we passed here. Particularly, we tried to address this issue of prescription drugs, heroin, and fentanyl.

The Washington Post recently published a stunning analysis showing why

it is so important that we continue to push back and how we got here. They showed that for the 6 years between 2006 and 2012, there was an absolutely unbelievably high number of shipments of prescription pain medications. Oxycodone and hydrocodone were the ones they focused on, which account for three-quarters of the total opioid pill shipments to pharmacies.

In a single CVS pharmacy right outside of Cleveland, OH, more than 6.4 million pills were delivered during that 6-year period. Think about that. In one small pharmacy, there were over 6 million pills. Overall, the Post found that over that period, more than 3.6 billion prescription pain pills were supplied to Ohio. That is "billion" with a "b." That is an astounding number. That means that during those 6 years, there were approximately 313 opioid prescription pain pills prescribed for every single man, woman, and child in Ohio. That is what we are talking about here.

Obviously, this was used as a way for people to take these pills and spread them, not just in Ohio but in other places, causing immense harm because people got addicted to these pills and turned to heroin and fentanyl. Many of these people are people who not just have an addiction but end up having overdoses, and many of them died.

This week, the largest civil trial in U.S. history will begin in my home State of Ohio. I think it is appropriate that it is in Ohio. This will consolidate cases from around the country. More than 2,000 cities, counties, Native American Tribes, and others will sue some of the biggest pharmaceutical companies and major distributors for their role in this drug crisis. The pharmaceutical companies and the distributors are going to be sued in court in Ohio through a consolidated case. This is the biggest civil trial, they say, in the history of our country.

Two of the Ohio plaintiff counties—Cuyahoga and Summit—have been among the areas in my State that were hardest hit by opioids. No wonder they are part of this lawsuit. In 2016, the death rate from pharmaceuticals—opioids, painkillers—in Cuyahoga County was 3.26 times the national average. In Summit County, so many people died from overdoses that a mobile morgue had to be created in order to help process the bodies. I was there in Summit County during that time period. They actually had to bring in a mobile unit to be able to deal with all the overdose deaths.

The more we find out about the sheer number of pills these drug companies pumped into the United States—more than 76 billion overall during that period—the more it is clear that lawsuits like this are going to be necessary to get to the bottom of what happened and require these entities to help those who were affected by these pain pills. A lot of these people turned to other substances that were more accessible and less expensive, like heroin, but had

started with an addiction to pain medication. We are pushing back against the opioid pill industry that flourished for too long within our borders. That is a positive sign.

While the CDC showed an overall decrease in overdose deaths, as I talked about earlier, there are some troubling trends that have continued.

First, while the number of opioid overdose deaths fell, the number of overdose deaths fell related to synthetic opioids—specifically, cheap and dangerous fentanyl—actually rose. Heroin and prescription drugs went down, but actually, for the synthetic opioid—which is 50 times more powerful than heroin and unfortunately produced overseas and shipped into our country—those numbers actually rose. Fentanyl deaths actually rose. In fact, last year, more deaths were attributed to fentanyl than to heroin and prescription drugs combined.

Fentanyl is the big new danger. There is overall progress, but fentanyl is getting worse. We had a report last week of a single kilo of fentanyl being seized in Middletown, OH, which is enough of the drug to kill more than half a million people. This was in our community, Middletown, OH. That is enough of the drug to kill more than half a million people.

We are beginning to push back on fentanyl, as some of you know, through legislation, including the STOP Act, which got passed in this Chamber and in the House. This is doing a better job with keeping this poison from coming through our U.S. mail system, which is where most of it has been coming from. Our own postal system has been the conduit for this poison. Most of it is coming from one country—China. It is produced in chemical labs there by unscrupulous scientists and chemists and then sent through the mail.

The 2019 audit by the inspector general of the Postal Service found that the Postal Service identified and pulled a package requested by Customs and Border Protection 88 percent of the time. This was an improvement from only 79 percent of the time the year before, in 2017, and only 67 percent of the time in 2016, but it is still not complying with the STOP Act. The STOP Act says 100 percent, not 88 percent.

Again, why is that important?

This stuff is getting in through the mail. If the U.S. Customs and Border Protection can identify these packages and screen them and pull them offline, less of that poison will come into our neighborhoods. It also raises the price of this product, which is part of the problem right now—that it is not just powerful and deadly but also inexpensive.

Overall, it was said that the Postal Service missed a number of packages—12 percent—due to operational errors. We can't afford these operational errors. It is too important.

We need to ensure that all packages that enter the United States have the kind of information we need to be able

to track potentially harmful packages once they get inside our border. This is advance electronic data. It is not required everywhere, but it needs to be.

The STOP Act requires the Postal Service to do that, including with 100 percent of the packages coming in from China. It required it, by the way, by December 31 of last year. Yet the Postal Service just informed us on the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, on which we did this work—where we investigated this over many, many months—that it has only received data on 52.8 percent of all of our international packages and only 70.7 percent on those from China for 2018. In March of this year, 2019, it was up to 57 percent and 78 percent. Let's get to 100 percent from China. This legislation requires 70 percent from other countries. There is no excuse for not meeting this. Again, it is the law of the land. So, while it is improving, the process is taking too long, and it has failed to meet the requirements in the STOP Act.

The next big milestone, by the way, in the implementation of the law requires the Postal Service to begin refusing foreign shipments without there being the required advance electronic data that reads where it is from, what is in it, and where it is going. This is to apply to any package to be received after December 31, 2020. At the end of next year, if it is not providing the data, we will refuse the package.

A lot of people have expressed concern about that to me. "My gosh. This is going to stop international freight back and forth." No. It is going to require the Postal Service to do what it should be doing already, which is to require these shippers to do what they should be doing, and that is to provide the data. It is not hard, and it is not expensive. Again, most people are doing it. By the way, FedEx, DHL, and UPS—the private carriers—have done it for years. They have done it based on the law that passed after the 9/11 attacks. It is our post office that has not. Sometimes it has viewed this, apparently, as its having a competitive advantage in its not having to require that. Do you know what? It is too important to us and to the deaths that are occurring from fentanyl not to require that.

We have to improve the screening in the mail, and we are, and we will continue to make progress on that. Of course, that is not all we have to do. More fentanyl is now coming from other places, particularly from across our southern border. This is very concerning because we have gaps on our southern border right now. They say that between 40 and 60 percent of the Border Patrol agents are being pulled off the border to deal with the very real humanitarian crisis on the border.

I was there a week ago last Friday, and I had an opportunity to speak to a number of Border Patrol agents who were processing individuals and dealing with the humanitarian needs of a surge

of families and children, including those who were claiming asylum. We need to have these people attending to the humanitarian needs and processing these individuals. Yet I will tell you, when I talked to the Border Patrol agents about it, that was not where they wanted to be. They want to be doing their jobs because they know these drugs are coming in when they are not out there with a watchful eye on our border.

Unfortunately, we are in a situation right now where we need more humanitarian aid, which we have finally provided, thank goodness. We also need more help on the border itself to be able to close some of these gaps. I want to be sure that we are, indeed, dealing with both issues. We can and should.

The drug smugglers who are affiliated with Mexican cartels are pretty smart. They know where there are gaps. They take advantage of them and bring in more fentanyl. Last year, Customs and Border Protection seized about 1,800 pounds of fentanyl at the border. In the first half of this year alone, it seized more than 2,000 pounds of fentanyl. This year, we are headed toward apprehending double the fentanyl at the border. I will tell you we don't know how much is coming in. Nobody does.

Because of these gaps and because of the Border Patrol's having been pulled off the border to deal with the very real crisis down there with regard to the humanitarian issue and the flux of people coming in, there are more gaps. The numbers of those shipments that have been apprehended have been bad enough—more than double this year. It has been enough fentanyl to kill millions of people, and it is probably worse than that.

This fentanyl is increasingly being laced into other drugs by the cartels. The fentanyl makes you so likely to become addicted that they put it in other things, including crystal meth, including cocaine, including heroin. Individuals who consume anything right now that is a street drug might be unknowingly ingesting this incredibly toxic drug fentanyl also and risking their lives because of the overdose deaths that are associated with it.

In Ohio, the number of overdose deaths attributed to fentanyl-laced cocaine and methamphetamines has increased dramatically. As an example, Columbus Public Health actually released a public alert just this week that urged anyone who uses drugs or knows someone who uses drugs to have naloxone, a miracle drug—some people call it Narcan—that reverses the effects of the overdose from opioids. They say you have to have this miracle drug on hand because of the fentanyl poisoning that is going on in Columbus. Already in 2019, 740 doses of Narcan have been issued in response to overdoses in one town alone, Toledo, OH.

This issue of fentanyl is very real. It is affecting our communities in new ways, and we have to be able to respond flexibly to what is happening. It remains a dangerous threat.

Also complicating the recovery process is the continued resurgence of psychostimulants, particularly crystal meth. Again, crystal meth is coming from—where?—across the border, from Mexico. You will probably remember that at one time in your communities, there was talk about meth labs. You may have seen some coverage of that, and you may have had some meth labs in your neighborhood. There are horrible environmental issues, obviously, in the producing of methamphetamines, which are so dangerous. Guess what. There are no more meth labs in your neighborhood. That is the good news. The bad news is, there are no meth labs because this stuff that comes in from Mexico is cheaper and more powerful, more devastating, and more damaging to our communities. So it is a concern.

The latest CDC data on overdose deaths—particularly with regard to opioids—is very hopeful, but the overdose deaths by psychostimulants and cocaine continue to increase. That is because, again, fentanyl is being mixed into these psychostimulants. Methamphetamine deaths increased by nearly 30 percent, and 42 percent of all overdose deaths last year were directly attributable to cocaine, psychostimulants like meth, or both mixed together. That is the new problem, and we have to address it.

As we have continued to fight opioid abuse, I recently introduced a bill, entitled “Combating Meth and Cocaine Act,” in order to address this resurgence and to be sure that here in Congress we are being flexible in responding to it and not waiting until we have another huge drug crisis here of a new way to mix drugs or a new resurgence of crystal meth. To date, grants provided by the 21st Century Cures Act, which is now called the State opioid response grants, have been used to increase access to naloxone—again, a very important drug—as well as to long-term addiction treatment and support services. Yet, for all the good these grants have done, they can’t be used to address the crisis beyond opioids, which ignores the underground reality, at least in my State and in so many other States.

Earlier this year, for example, I participated in a roundtable discussion with leaders in Knox County, and I do this around the State on a regular basis. In Knox County, the prosecutor’s office estimated that 80 to 90 percent of all drug incidents now involve crystal meth—methamphetamines. They told me they have been able to use the State opioid response grants to help with the treatment and recovery services but that they are not effective with regard to meth because there is not an effective way to treat meth with drugs, as there is with opioids. There is

not an effective way to use the Narcan with meth, as there is with opioids. So we need to be more flexible in providing these communities with the help they need to combat this new resurgence. Our legislation will allow the State opioid response grants to be used for programs that focus on methamphetamines and on cocaine usage. More flexibility is important.

We know these funds are making a difference, so the bill will also reauthorize the State opioid response grants for 5 years, which will give some certainty by providing the \$500 million annually that will be needed to ensure there will be a stable funding stream to go to these innovative programs in the States. This is a simple, commonsense change. It will allow State and local organizations the flexibility they need to fight what is quickly becoming a two-front war on addiction—opioids but also psychostimulants that are coming back with a vengeance.

The latest data from the CDC is a promising sign that we can and will recover from the drug crisis if we continue to work to give those in need the help they need to get back on their feet. We also need to ensure that we don’t rest on our laurels as cartels continue to innovate themselves and try different angles.

There is so much money in this that these deadly drugs will continue to come unless we show the same kind of flexibility when responding. If they can, they are going to continue to send drugs through the postal system. They are going to continue to send them across the southern border. Fentanyl, cocaine, and meth have shown themselves to be continuing public health threats, and we have to keep working—all of us here on a bipartisan basis—to ensure that State and local governments get the resources they need to help stem the tide.

The Federal Government has been a better partner over the past few years with our States, with our localities, and with our nonprofits that are there in the trenches, doing the hard work. We can’t give up now. The numbers from the CDC are hopeful with regard to opioids, but that just means we need to redouble our efforts to ensure that we do not now back off. We cannot take our eye off the ball. We have to continue to focus on what we are doing and then add to that more flexible responses to the new resurgence of fentanyl being mixed with meth and crystal meth coming in directly from Mexico. This new drug reality is one that must be met with the same kind of innovative response we have responded with here in the last few years.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I rise after 10 years of being in the Senate and after having endured speech after speech after speech on this floor that has claimed the Republican Party is

the party of fiscal discipline. It was politics that created something during the depths of the worst recession, called the tea party, which rallied all over America to stop what it said was runaway spending.

When I arrived here, I actually believed that the Republican Party was a fiscally responsible party, that there was some principle behind it. I know better today. I was naive. It is all about politics.

There have been five budget deals since 2013 between Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL and whoever has happened to be in the White House. These deals were meant to overcome the idiocy of the across-the-board cuts that were created by the sequestration—which nobody in America understands but which are basically across-the-board cuts on spending—that otherwise would have been investments in your family, maybe, or investments in our military. They were agreed to as part of a fiscal cliff deal in the dark of night, at 2 o’clock in the morning, by nobody—literally nobody—who had actually read the bill. Ever since then, politicians in Washington have been making deals to try to overcome it.

When President Obama was President, this is how much money he was allowed to spend. Since Donald Trump has been President, this is the money that the Republicans have spent. This red is defense, and the blue is non-defense.

Under President Obama the deals increased by an average of \$33 billion above the sequester. The two deals under Donald Trump increased spending by \$154 billion, four times as much—four times as much—at a moment when the President is saying our economy is the best it has ever been in American history.

The result of this is that under Donald Trump the deficit has increased by 15 percent each year. The deficit just between last year and this year is up by 23 percent as a result of the Republican majority in the Senate and Donald Trump.

We are on track to run \$1 trillion deficits every year as far as the eye can see. That is after 10 years of economic growth and unemployment below 4 percent.

At no time in our history have deficits been this large outside of a major war or a recession, which brings me to my second slide.

This is the annual spending growth around here. This is the annual spending growth around here of defense and nondefense. They are both in here.

Under President Obama, in his first term, the spending went up by 3 percent. We were in the worst recession since the Great Depression. He had to pass the Recovery Act. That is in this number. That is in this number. It was at the depths of the worst recession since the Great Depression. Three million Americans lost their homes, and 9 million Americans lost their jobs. We had a 10-percent unemployment rate—

not a 4-percent rate, not a 3 and change, but a 10-percent rate. In the name of fiscal responsibility, Republicans did nothing except berate the President for trying to save the economy and for what he was trying to do.

I will come to that in a moment.

This includes the Recovery Act. Overall growth—annual spending growth—grew by 3 percent during President Obama's first term. It fell by 2 percent during President Obama's second term.

It has gone up by 4 percent during Trump's first term. It has increased more under this Republican President. Admittedly, he is not a conservative. It has grown more under this Republican President than it did when President Obama was trying to save the economy during the worst recession since the Great Depression. This 3 percent number includes the Recovery Act. The Republicans are now growing government spending by more than that—by more than that.

Here is what they said when they wouldn't lift a finger during the depths of the worst recession. Congressman MIKE PENCE, before he was Vice President, said:

We the people do not consent to runaway Federal spending. We the people do not consent to the notion that we can borrow and spend and bail our way back to a growing America.

He said that to a tea party rally here in Washington, DC, that was here to stop runaway spending.

Where are they today? It is worse today than it ever was under President Obama. It is far worse, not a little bit worse, because not included on this slide are the tax cuts that have never paid for themselves and are not paying for themselves here.

Donald Trump and the Republicans have created \$2 trillion of deficit spending because of the tax cuts and \$2 trillion of deficit spending because of the spending.

By the way, they are not actually spending this money, in a sense. They are borrowing all of it from our children. They have not paid for a dollar of it—not one dollar. They are borrowing it from the pages who are here. They are borrowing it from the children of cops, teachers, and firefighters—that is who they are borrowing it from—to give tax cuts to rich people, to make our economic inequality greater.

Congressman Mick Mulvaney, now the President's Chief of Staff, talking about the Obama administration's budget at the time, said:

It's hard to explain how detached from reality that is, to think that the country can spend another \$1.6 trillion when it doesn't have the means. It means either you haven't been paying attention or you don't care.

He is the President's Chief of Staff. He is the President's Budget Director.

If that was runaway spending, how is this not runaway spending?

The junior Senator from Texas said:

The debt is out of control. And, it is jeopardizing the future for our kids. I have got two little kids who are 4 and 2.

He lectured the President.

And, the idea of handing them a \$16 trillion debt, I think is immoral.

Really? What about \$24 trillion? What about \$30 trillion? Is that more moral than \$16 trillion? Really?

Now, former Speaker Paul Ryan said: "We will end up with a Greece-like situation on our hands."

"A debt crisis is coming to the country."

That is what he said here.

Admittedly, he left in the middle of a government shutdown, never to come back to Washington, DC—a fitting end to a decade of fiscal fights and shutdowns and government closures, all done in the name of fiscal responsibility, never actually achieving it and—never, ever actually achieving it—only for the opportunity to spend like this.

I can't tell you the number of times I have heard about this on this floor:

The debt and the deficit are just getting out of control, and the administration is still pumping through billions and trillions of new spending.

Paul Ryan said:

Our debt is out of control. What was a fiscal challenge is now a fiscal crisis. We cannot deny it; instead we must, as Americans confront it responsibly. And that is exactly what the Republicans pledged to do.

That is exactly what the Republicans pledged to do. They immobilized our government. They shut it down over and over and over in the name of fiscal responsibility—no help to the economy or the next generation. That is the farthest thought from their mind.

After years of obstruction in the name of fiscal responsibility, they nominated Donald Trump, who promised during the campaign to deliver a giant, beautiful, massive tax cut and borrowed all of the money for it from working people in this country.

There was a mayor in Indiana who wrote a piece about that in the paper that I thought was so instructive.

He said: That tax plan would be tantamount to my going to my city council and saying that I want to go borrow more money than we have ever borrowed before in the history of our town, and I am not going to use it to invest in roads or bridges or the sewers or anything else, and I am just going to take the money we borrowed that our kids are going to have to give back, and I am going to give it to the richest neighborhood in my town.

He said they would have asked: What have you been smoking?

He promised to pass "one of the largest increases in national defense spending in American history" and "not touch Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid."

He said he would eliminate not only the deficit. This is Donald Trump, the candidate whom the Republicans voted for, whom FOX News, which is in theory the conservative channel, has supported like an organ of the State, with hosts who claim they are fiscally responsible. But he promised to elimi-

nate not only the deficit but the entire national debt—that immoral debt of \$16 trillion that is now climbing to \$30 trillion.

And the way he was going to do that was by "vigorously eliminating waste, fraud, and abuse in the federal government, ending redundant government programs, and growing the economy," as well as by "renegotiating all of our [debt] deals."

He hasn't renegotiated one. He spent more time failing to get a deal with the leader of North Korea than trying to address this challenge.

Donald Trump said:

It can be done. . . . it will take place and it will go relatively quickly. If you have the right people, like in the agencies and the various people that do the balancing . . . you can cut the numbers by two pennies and three pennies and balance a budget quickly and have a stronger and better country.

This is the President of the United States of America.

That is ridiculous. That is ridiculous, but it is no more ridiculous than the history of the Republican Party, the supposedly fiscally conservative party—what a joke.

Going back to 2001, the last time we had a surplus in America, Bill Clinton was President. He was a Democrat. He had a \$5 trillion projected surplus over the decade—unimaginable today. It is unimaginable today, but politicians like us were having discussions about what to do with the surplus, what to do with abundance, how to make Social Security solvent, how to give the middle class a real tax cut, not a fake tax cut that is masquerading and covering up the tax cut for rich people.

But we did none of that, and, instead, George Bush, who followed Bill Clinton, cut taxes in 2001. Almost all of the benefit went to wealthy people. He cut taxes in 2003, and both times it was just like Donald Trump said and the Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL said both times. They said: Oh, don't worry about it. They will pay for themselves.

A lie, a lie, and the number is in the math. It is not about philosophy. This isn't about ideology. This is about the math, and everybody in America could see it because that is what produced the \$16 trillion that Paul Ryan said was so immoral, \$8 trillion ago and on the way to \$30 trillion in debt.

By the way, it is important to know that when this Congress voted for those tax cuts in 2003 that were not paid for, the money was all borrowed by the sons and daughters of working people in America. We had troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. So we didn't even have the decency while we had people at war to pay for those wars or to say to the American people: We need to pay for those wars. No, we are not going to pay for those wars, and we are going to borrow the money from America to give tax cuts to rich people.

Then, President Bush, on top of that, seeking reelection, passed Medicare Part D, the drug program for seniors, and paid for none of that either. All

that money is from our children—all of it—and there has never been an effort to pay for it since.

Then, because of their lax regulatory oversight of the housing market, the economy collapsed. The economy collapsed, and Barack Obama was handed not a \$5 trillion surplus but a \$1.2 trillion deficit from the Republicans, from George Bush. During the course of his Presidency, we had to weather the worst recession since the Great Depression. The worst it ever got around here was \$1.5 trillion on the deficit, and the other side called him a Bolshevik and a Socialist. Well-meaning people from all over Wall Street and other places came down here and said: Fix the debt. Fix the debt.

Where are they today? Where are they today?

By the time he left, President Obama had cut the deficit by more than half—by more than half.

Every one of these deals has been cut by MITCH MCCONNELL, every single one. So it didn't surprise me at all this week that he was reported in the Washington Post to have said to the President that no politician has ever lost an election spending more money. No politician has ever lost an election spending more money, said the Republican majority leader to the President. I can't think of a more Bolshevik statement than that, to use terms that the other side has been using for 10 years. I can't think of a more irresponsible position than that when we are not in the depths of a recession, when 10 million people haven't lost their jobs, when the economy, according to the President, is the best economy we have ever had.

This is the moment we should be securing our future. This is the moment we should be preparing for another foreign engagement. Because of these deals that have been led by MITCH MCCONNELL, the Republican leader from Kentucky, when you add it all up, not only do we have this extraordinary deficit that we have never seen in the country's history—

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 1 additional minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BENNET. But since 2001, we have cut taxes by \$5 trillion. We borrowed all of that money from our children, and almost all of the benefit went to the wealthiest people in America. We spent \$5.6 trillion on wars in the Middle East. We didn't pay for a single dollar of it. That is \$11 trillion, \$12 trillion that we could have spent to fix every road and bridge in America, that could have fixed every single airport in America that needs it, that could have made Social Security solvent for my children's generation and for the other children of the people who came out here and said: We are here to immobilize the Democratic President in the name of fiscal responsibility. But now we know the level of their fiscal hypocrisy. It knows no end.

If there is one benefit of this—if there is one benefit of this, the American people are—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. BENNET. I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of the following named officer for appointment as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., sections 152 and 601 to be General: GEN Mark A. Milley.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Milley nomination?

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 89, nays 1, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 230 Ex.]

YEAS—89

Alexander	Duckworth	McSally
Baldwin	Durbin	Menendez
Barrasso	Enzi	Murkowski
Bennet	Ernst	Murphy
Blackburn	Feinstein	Murray
Blumenthal	Fischer	Paul
Blunt	Gardner	Peters
Boozman	Graham	Portman
Braun	Grassley	Reed
Brown	Hassan	Risch
Burr	Hawley	Roberts
Cantwell	Heinrich	Romney
Capito	Hirono	Rosen
Cardin	Hoeven	Rounds
Carper	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Casey	Inhofe	Sasse
Cassidy	Johnson	Schatz
Collins	Jones	Schumer
Coons	Kaine	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cortez Masto	King	Shaheen
Cotton	Lankford	Shelby
Cramer	Lee	Sinema
Crapo	Manchin	Smith
Cruz	Markey	Stabenow
Daines	McConnell	Sullivan

Tester	Udall	Wicker
Thune	Van Hollen	Wyden
Tillis	Warner	Young
Toomey	Whitehouse	

NAYS—1

Merkley

NOT VOTING—10

Booker	Klobuchar	Sanders
Gillibrand	Leahy	Warren
Harris	Moran	
Isakson	Perdue	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

The majority whip.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, yesterday we confirmed two more excellent judges in the Senate. Despite Democratic obstruction, we continue to move forward on confirming nominees to the Federal bench.

Some of our Democratic colleagues have criticized the amount of time the Senate spends on judges. We have spent a substantial amount of time on judges because we have had to.

Back in the day, most of the judicial nominees we are considering would have been confirmed without the time-consuming cloture vote process. By this point in President Obama's first term, Republicans had required cloture votes on just three—three—of President Obama's judicial nominees. Let's compare that to today.

As of yesterday, July 24, Democrats had required cloture votes on a staggering 94 judicial nominees—94—to 3 at this same point under President Obama.

It is not because they are fiercely opposed to all of these nominees. In fact, again and again, Democrats have turned around and voted for the very same judges they delayed.

Just a couple of weeks ago in the Senate, we confirmed three district court judges by huge bipartisan margins: 78 to 15, 80 to 14, and 85 to 10. Clearly, these were not nominees that Democrats bitterly opposed. Yet Democrats insisted on the same old delaying cloture vote tactic they have used with so many judicial nominees.

I, too, am frustrated that we have had to spend a lot of time on judges. I