

below 45 is because we didn't have jurisdiction over those in Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. Those were all in other groups.

In the area of housing, we have 160 programs—160 programs—and they are administered by 20 different agencies. So really, nobody is in charge. So nobody is setting goals. So nobody is checking to see if it is working. Nobody is checking to see if the program over here in one of those 20 is the same as the program over here in another one of the 20, which would allow them to be merged.

Merging saves money. If you merge, you only need one director, instead of two, and you don't need all the assistants there were. You only need the assistants for one program, and the money that would be stuck in Washington can actually go to what we thought was going to get done. Every merger results in savings. Elimination results in more savings. How much better would it be to move the money to where the results are?

The proposed budget reforms that Senator WHITEHOUSE and I have worked on would provide for portfolio reviews. Here is how that works. Each committee would have to look at all of the programs, of the type that would be in their jurisdiction if it weren't handled in a bunch of other places. So those other places would have to look at the ones under their jurisdiction. If we can get that portfolio review, I think we would find that some of those areas where we are doing it time after time, mostly by just adding to Washington bureaucracy.

We want the money out there where the problem is. We think we are solving

problems, but we are not solving problems. We are just hiring more people in DC. We used to have a policy that the last person hired would be the first person fired and that resulted in an increase in government, too, because as soon as you got hired, you could expand your workload so you needed an assistant, and now you weren't the first in line to be fired. That has resulted in a lot of people working in Washington. How much money actually makes it to the problem? We ought to see if the money makes it to the people or if we are just increasing Washington bureaucracy.

Over the next few weeks, I will be going into some detail on each of these problems with budgeting. I will also be promoting the budget reforms that Senator WHITEHOUSE and I and the Budget Committee have put out favorably. I think that is the first budget provision in about the last 20 decades that has come out of the committee in a bipartisan way.

Now, I could tell you that the reforms that we proposed will not solve all of the problem. You can't take that big of a leap when you have that big of a problem. But while those reforms will not solve the problem, they should help to make the solutions more noticeable.

We are having trouble getting that on the floor, too.

I really came to the floor to eliminate some of the concerns about the President's budget. I want people to know that they don't all have to fly to Washington to make their case to the Budget Committee for their program. Once the Budget Committee sets the parameters, then, the detail comes into

play with the Appropriations Committee.

Talk to your appropriators. They spend the money—the exact dollars. Do your work there, but be sure your program is as effective as it can be. Also, take a little look at how many similar Federal programs there are. See if there can be a savings by merging some, thus getting more money out in the field where you are and getting more money on the problem.

Once again, the President's budget came out today. It consists of a set of documents a foot high. In my opinion, the whole pile should be replaced with a list from the President of what he thinks are pretty good ideas to do this year and, hopefully, there will also be a little piece in there that says how you can pay for it.

So don't waste any time searching out the President's budget program cuts. Congress doesn't pay any attention to the President's budget exercise. That is all it is—an exercise. Congress holds the purse strings, according to the Constitution, and Congress is very protective of that constitutional authority. Now we need to do the work that goes with that authority.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:38 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, February 11, 2020, at 10 a.m.