

point, briefly, it makes no difference what the President says on additional spending, because on the budget Rules of the House, if we spend more than \$645 billion, we will have to sequester next year in order to bring the spending back. That is the discipline that we used to have in this body, but we have thrown it out the window for the last 3 years.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I want to come back to close on my story about the State legislature and about how virtually every governor works with their State legislature. At the end of the session, the legislative leaders and the Governor sit down and they decide how much the pie is going to be, how much the State is going to spend. And once that decision is made and there is an agreement made, it takes a matter of about 48 hours for the various committees to work out how much goes to transportation, how much to education. That is what we need to do here at the Federal level; and hopefully, we can have better bipartisanship next year.

A CONTINUATION OF HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, how much is enough?

When we talk about education, it is about where the decisions are going to be made. There are those in Washington who would like to take primary responsibility for building our local schools, wiring our local schools, buying the technology for our schools, hiring our local teachers, developing our curriculum, testing our kids, feed them breakfast, feed them lunch and develop after-school programs. When they get done with taking that decision-making to Washington, they are very willing to step back and say, the rest is now under your control. But in fact, what they have done is they have moved the focal point from our local teachers and our local administrators from taking a look at the needs of our children to taking a look at the bureaucratic requirements coming out of Washington.

How much is enough? We have enough. Local schools get 7 percent of their money from Washington, 50 percent of their paperwork. That paperwork goes to an agency here in Washington that cannot even get a clean set of books, that every time we give them \$1 for education spending at a local level, they consume 35 cents of it before it ever gets back to a local classroom.

I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to point out two things. One of the reasons I think we cannot get an answer to the question of how much is enough is because the President is no longer in town. We know that part of the strat-

egy seems to be keep Washington tied up, keep Congress in Washington, and then I will hit the campaign trail. The President is on his way to Kentucky to campaign against the gentlewoman from Kentucky (Mrs. NORTHUP). Now, that must feel great if one is the President of the United States, but we are talking about children here. We are talking about real business here, and we are talking about, it is time to put people in front of politics.

The gentleman knows, since he has worked real hard on the dollars to the classroom bill by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) that said our efforts on education would go to the teacher closest to the student in the classroom and not Washington bureaucrats. Right now, when we spend \$1 on education, 50 cents never gets out of town. That is not acceptable.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I yield to the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE).

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I would just say to the gentleman from Texas, as a past supporter of the Blue Dog budget as well, and someone who did not vote to raise the caps to the \$645 billion level, that I think if the Blue Dog budget had been the one adopted by the House, it would have met probably the same fate that the budget today has met.

We did our work in the House. We passed bills at a \$602 billion level; and the President, as is customarily the case at this point in the legislative process, is extorting us or using I think his leverage at the end game to try and get more money out of the Congress. So that is why this thing keeps getting bid up and bid up and bid up.

We have, in fact, in the past, done some good things here. We balanced the budget. This will be the 4th year in a row. We have stopped the raid on Social Security. We have been paying down systematically the Federal debt over the past 3 years. But all that good work could be for naught if we give the President everything that he wants and everything that he asks for, which, as the gentleman noted, also includes a number of things that we just fundamentally disagree with, like putting more power in the educational bureaucracy here in Washington instead of getting it back in the classroom.

So I appreciate the issues that have been raised by our colleagues on the other side here about the budget; but the reality is, we are still going to be in the same positions that we are in today when it comes to negotiating with the President who wants to spend more and who cannot answer the very simple, fundamental question, and that is, how much is enough?

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. I yield to the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, it is an interesting question, and it is a sad

commentary, I think, on the legislative process in Washington to just see what is taking place here. We have Democrats and Republicans essentially agreeing that we are spending too much money. Why is that?

At this point in the game, it would seem that if we agree we are spending too much money, it seems logical that maybe a few months ago, a few weeks ago, we might have been able to agree on spending less. But we do have to compromise not only with Republicans and Democrats, but we have to compromise with the White House as well, and we have compromised and compromised and compromised, trying to, in good faith, reach agreement with the White House, the President's liberal spending habits, and yet as a result of our efforts, there is a point in time when it is a legitimate question to ask, how much can we spend? How much is enough? That is the point we are at now. We have conceded on issue after issue after issue with the White House.

A CONTINUATION OF HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFFER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, we have to wonder, when is it going to end? That is the question that is on the minds of all of us here. We are here in Washington on a Sunday night, which is completely out of character, first and foremost, but 3½ weeks beyond the beginning of the new fiscal year. We have debated with the White House so long now that the fiscal year has already started, we are passing these 1-day continuing resolutions, and I am afraid, I would say to my colleagues, that what really seems to be driving the agenda down there at the White House is not a real sincere effort to try to come to some resolution on this budget, I think it is motivated by a political ambition to try to scare the American people to believe that we are not paying enough, that we are not spending enough. I hope that we can send the message down to the White House that we have spent enough, that we have already reached enough.

Before I yield to some of my colleagues, I want to reflect on the comment of a 16-year-old girl that I just met back here in the back of the Chamber. She is from Albert Lea, Minnesota in the gentleman from Minnesota's district, and her name is Sara Schleck, she is a page back here and working for the House. I said, you are here on a Sunday night; what do you think about being here on a Sunday. She said to me, she said, Congressman, is not our Government big enough already?

Mr. Speaker, that is the question most Americans should be asking, and a 16-year-old girl certainly is perceptive enough to realize that we are here because there are people who just want