

be any prospective use of this; only those existing mortgages today—that is the only way to come to the bottom of this crisis.

We are working with these financial institutions to try to find reasonable terms to work this out, but we have not had a lot of luck. Citigroup stepped forward. We reached an agreement with them. We are trying to reach an agreement with others. But for the mortgage bankers, who brought us into this mess, to still hold this Congress enthralled, to hold us hostage to their so-called sanctity of contract, is to ignore the obvious.

If they have their way, there will be a continued crisis of mortgage foreclosures, the recession will get worse instead of better, and neighborhoods such as Albany Park will disintegrate, deteriorate because of the foreclosures of homes in the neighborhood. Renters who dutifully pay their rent show up one day to be told: Oh, incidentally, your landlord defaulted on the mortgage and now you are going to be thrown out on the street. Over and over again, and it is totally unfair.

We have to do something. I am glad the House is going to take up this measure. We need to move on it. We waited a year. That is long enough.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, let me withhold.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

OMNIBUS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2009

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 1105, which the clerk will report by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1105) making omnibus appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2009, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McCain amendment No. 592, in the nature of a substitute.

AMENDMENT NO. 592

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 11:45 a.m. will be equally divided and controlled between the Senator from Arizona and the Senator from Hawaii or their designees on amendment No. 592.

The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, let me yield myself such time as I may consume.

I will be brief this morning, but I wish to make a couple points. The appropriations bill that is on the floor of the Senate represents the bills that were not completed last year but were

worked through in the individual subcommittees, and the full Appropriations Committee of the Senate, passed, as I indicated earlier, almost unanimously, for every piece of legislation, by all Republicans and all Democrats in the Appropriations Committee. So it is not as if there is something strange here.

The question is, Do we want to pass an appropriations bill, at least for the last half of this year, that funds the agencies the way Congress has determined they should be funded? Or do we want to defeat this bill and go on autopilot and say: Whatever was done last year, that is what we will do next year. That does not make much sense to me. What we might have done last year should be judged on the basis: Did it work? Did it not work? Where are the increases we probably ought to make some additional appropriations for? Or where are some areas that ought to be cut?

All these things represent a matter of judgment by Members of the Senate and particularly members of the Appropriations Committee who are funding the individual agencies.

I mentioned, a moment ago, there is an account I cut in the subcommittee I chair by \$100 million because I felt it was not needed in the coming fiscal year, and I would move that \$100 million to fund something else I thought was very important. Well, that is the kind of thing that will not exist if we decide: Whatever was spent last year in all those accounts, that is what we will spend going forward. That is devoid of any kind of judgment at all.

Let me mention some areas we have felt should be increased. I will give you some examples. One is the funding to prepare for a potential pandemic flu. Obviously, it is a very significant issue. This country needs to be prepared in the event we suffer in our lifetimes a pandemic flu. An influenza, pandemic epidemic that would move around this world would be very serious, kill a lot of people. The need to be prepared for that is very important. There are funds available in this legislation to begin that preparation.

The efforts to improve the warning systems to notify communities about severe weather: This deals with the funding that is necessary for the next-generation satellites. This is not just something that is convenient. When killer storms and hurricanes and other things are threatening population centers, it is a need to have the very finest capability to warn people. This is the money that is needed to continue that progress in improving warning systems through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration weather and climate satellites. That is in this bill to continue that work.

In my subcommittee, nonproliferation programs—and that is the issue of trying to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the programs we have to try to prevent terrorist groups from acquiring the kind of material with

which they can produce nuclear weapons—we provide funding for that and increased funding for that, which is very necessary. It is funding to the National Nuclear Security Administration, and it is critical to our efforts to secure weapons-grade nuclear material around the world that even today, as I speak, terrorists are trying to acquire.

So that issue of nonproliferation—we have increased some funding for it. If we decide we are not going to proceed with the normal appropriations bills that have now been put in this omnibus and instead we are going to go with a continuing resolution, that extra funding to try to protect us and stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons is gone.

There are so many areas. The area of science: our National Laboratories. You know the Bell Labs, which used to be the jewels in our country of scientific inquiry and discovery, and all the unbelievable inventions and new knowledge, those labs are largely gone. Now our science laboratories in this country—and the three weapons laboratories and the array of science laboratories—represent the repository of the best and brightest Ph.D.s in physics and engineering and mathematics and so on. We have to keep our lead in the world in these areas. This legislation provides the increased funding for our science labs that our country has already made a decision to do. If we do not go forward, then we go backward, we lose some of those best and brightest scientists and engineers.

At one of our laboratories, we have something called the Roadrunner, which is the most powerful computer in the world.

That is not elsewhere; that is here in our country. They were telling me one day about the roadrunner, what is called a petaflop, which is a thousand teraflops. A teraflop is a computer that has capacity to do 1 trillion distinct functions per second. That is a teraflop. We reached that 11 years ago. Now we have done a thousand teraflops, or what is called a petaflop. One thousand trillion functions per second in this world's most powerful computer. What can you do with that? Well, they are talking about studying the synapses—1 billion synapses of the brain to work how it works together to produce what we call vision. We don't know that. With supercomputing, the potential to know a lot of things is breathtaking. That exists here. It is the most powerful computer in the world here.

We have to continue to keep our edge in science and knowledge and invention. Part of that will be dependent upon how we fund our national laboratories and whether we keep that group of scientists and engineers working on these breathtaking inventions and the development of new knowledge. We can only do that if we continue the commitment we have made to fund our science in our national laboratories.