

share. We need those trade agreements approved to create jobs and to grow this economy. I hope the White House will send those, follow through on their rhetoric and actually send those trade agreements up here so we can act on them.

It has been 771 days since we passed a budget in this country. We and the administration talk about doing something about spending and debt, and yet here we are having gone 771 days without even having passed a budget, the most fundamental responsibility we have to the taxpayers of this country. If we are serious about spending and debt, we need a budget that sets a blueprint for a more fiscally sustainable future for this country. We need energy policies that allow us to develop American energy to get fuel costs under control, which also impacts in a very direct way our economy and our ability to create jobs.

The solutions are out there, they are very straightforward and simple. We need to have the will to move forward and address these issues and I hope we will because the American people expect and deserve that we will. As Dr. Walker pointed out last week, in my State of South Dakota, if we do not, we are headed for a fiscal train wreck.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Utah is recognized.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask for enough time to give my remarks this morning and I ask for an equivalent amount of time for the other side.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HATCH. I hope I can stay within the time constraints, but I am not sure.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Utah is recognized.

Mr. HATCH. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. HATCH pertaining to the submission of S. Con. Res. 23 are located in today's RECORD under "Submission of Concurrent Senate Resolutions.")

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

TECHNICAL SERGEANT KRISTOFFER M. SOLESBEE

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to TSgt Kristoffer M. Solesbee of Hill Air Force Base's 75th Civil Engineer Squadron. Technical Sergeant Solesbee was killed in action near the city of Shorabak, Afghanistan.

Technical Sergeant Solesbee was a brave and courageous man. Not only did he volunteer to serve his country, returning to the field of battle three times, twice in Iraq and this final tour in Afghanistan, but he volunteered for one of the most dangerous assignments in the war on terrorism; he was an explosive ordnance disposal technician.

This is not the first time a member of Hill's EOD flight had been killed

while protecting his fellow servicemembers from improvised explosive devices. In early 2007, three other members of the 75th Civil Engineering Squadron were also killed. Yet, despite this tragedy, Technical Sergeant Solesbee always returned to duty. I believe one of Utah's largest newspapers, The Standard Examiner, paid him the highest tribute when it stated "Kristoffer M. Solesbee died doing what he loved: saving lives." I cannot think of a better definition of a true hero.

From those who knew him best, his family, friends and fellow servicemembers, described him as smart and highly energetic. Growing up he loved model rockets and radio controlled cars and airplanes. During his 11-year career in the service, his fellow airmen came to rely upon him and his professionalism. Indeed, there is broad consensus among Hill's EOD technicians that he was the benchmark by which others were judged.

His distinguished service also did not go unrecognized. Technical Sergeant Solesbee was the recipient of the Bronze Star Medal with Valor device and second oak leaf cluster, the Air Force Meritorious Service Medal, Purple Heart Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Air Force Achievement Medal with one oak leaf cluster, and the Air Force Combat Action Medal.

I know God will be watching over the family of this admirable man. He gave his life so that others may live. TSgt Kristoffer M. Solesbee will never be forgotten.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HONORING RAFAT R. ANSARI

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, once again, I come to the floor to celebrate and recognize the contribution of our Federal employees. I do this on a regular basis because while we debate the issues of the day and grapple with issues around the debt and deficit and the circumstances that will require us to cut back on government spending, I think it is important to remember the literally millions of Americans who work in one form or another for our Federal Government day-in and day-out. From our armed services, to folks who work within this Capitol Complex, to folks who work within Health and Human Services, to those who work in research, to those who make enormous contributions to our Nation, we should not lose sight of them as we grapple with the debt and deficit and a host of other issues we deal with in this body.

So today I rise to honor another great Federal employee, Rafat Ansari. Mr. Ansari is a senior scientist and leading innovator at NASA's Glenn Research Center in Cleveland. He has been recognized for developing a safe, noninvasive laser device that could drastically improve the early detection of cataracts and improve people's lives in the process.

Cataracts are the leading cause of vision loss and blindness in the United States and in the world. They affect over 22 million Americans over the age of 40, and over \$6.8 billion is spent annually in the United States on cataract treatment.

Mr. Ansari was motivated to help cataract patients after his father was diagnosed with the disease. He began researching the disease and realized that cataracts are caused by proteins in the lens that cluster abnormally, a process similar to what he was studying in his space experiments.

Lacking the necessary financial resources, he began conducting research in his home kitchen using a light-scattering device which was able to identify clustered proteins in the eye lens. These kitchen experiments ultimately led to Mr. Ansari's invention of an innovative eye-scanning device and procedure that is at least two or three times stronger than any device on the market.

His invention also has the potential to significantly improve the ability to detect early signs of Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, diabetes, and many other diseases. The procedure is currently used by NASA to study the long-term consequences of space travel on the vision of astronauts.

Mr. Ansari's personal story is a testament to all that continues to make our Nation great. Born in Pakistan, Mr. Ansari always dreamed of working for NASA. Not only was he able to realize his dream of working for our government, working for NASA, but in the process he has made discoveries that could have a big impact on the lives of millions of people not only here in the United States but around the world.

I hope my colleagues will join me in honoring Mr. Ansari and those other great scientists and engineers at NASA for their excellence and service to our Nation.

So, again, I wish to acknowledge not only Mr. Ansari but all of our Federal workers. I think it is important. As somebody who has been very involved—and hopeful to do more—on this issue of debt and deficit, I know we will have to make substantial cutbacks in how government spends and operates. But I think we need to remember, as we talk about some of these cuts, that we are affecting the lives of literally millions of good Americans who try to keep the functions of this government working on an efficient, honest, and ethical basis day-in and day-out.

With that, I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.