

with such important movements such as women's suffrage and civil rights abolishing discrimination based on gender and race. There is no reason why this tradition should not continue with gay rights as well. Currently, only seven states in the entire country allow same-sex marriage, and I am proud to live in one of the few states that has begun to lead the way. I have many friends and relatives that consider themselves gay or bisexual and are actively involved in the LGBT community, and I have witnessed their struggles as they have realized that many are intolerant of their lifestyles. The entire country should follow Vermont's example and legalize same-sex marriage to continue to encourage not only the rights of certain groups of people, but the rights of everyone.

In conclusion, the challenges that we face with unemployment, the environment, and gay rights are just some of the challenges that, when dealt with appropriately, will make our country stronger and greater than before. Though our current situation looks bleak, we can always work towards goals such as these that will help make America and the world a better place.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TESTER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### THE BUDGET

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, in listening to some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle—both in speeches here and in press statements they have made—I repeatedly hear them saying we have not had a budget for 1,000 days. That is just wrong. That is absolutely wrong. Sometimes I wonder if our colleagues are paying attention to what goes on here on the floor of the Senate. Have they already forgotten the Budget Control Act? Here it is. On August 2nd of last year, the Budget Control Act passed this body 74 to 26. More than half of our Republican colleagues voted for it. Didn't they know what they were voting on? The Budget Control Act contains the budget for this year and for next year. Weren't they paying attention? Don't they know what they voted on?

In many ways, the Budget Control Act is stronger than a typical budget resolution, and it is stronger in these ways: No. 1, it is more extensive than a traditional budget resolution. No. 2, it has the force of law. Unlike a budget resolution that is not signed by the President, the Budget Control Act that we passed last August, that provides the budget for this year and for next year, is a law passed by the House of Representatives, passed by the Senate, signed by the President of the United States—the Budget Control Act. It also set discretionary caps on spending for 10 years instead of the 1 year normally set in a budget resolution.

So when our colleagues come out here and say we have not had a budget in 1,000 days, wow, can they really have missed the vote, the debate, the consideration of the Budget Control Act? Did they really miss all that or—or—are they saying something they know to be untrue, because really those are the only choices you are left with. Either they do not know what they did or they are misrepresenting what we all did.

Not only does the Budget Control Act set discretionary caps for 10 years, it also provided enforcement mechanisms, including a 2-year “deeming” resolution, allowing budget points of order to be enforced. That is what a budget does. It sets the spending levels, it creates spending caps, and it provides enforcement mechanisms. All of that is in the Budget Control Act we passed on August 2nd of last year with a vote of 74 to 26. Not only did we pass it, but the Republican-controlled House passed it, and the President signed it. It is the law of the land. It sets the budget for this year. It sets the budget for next year. It provides enforcement mechanisms. It sets 10 years of spending caps. And it created a reconciliation-like supercommittee to address entitlement and tax reforms. That supercommittee did not come up with a result, but they were established in the Budget Control Act, and they were given the authority—just like a reconciliation provision would—to come back with a package that could not be filibustered and could not be altered and could pass with a simple majority. That is the fact.

So if we hear colleagues come out and say one more time that we have not had a budget for 1,000 days, I hope somebody will have the sense to stand up and say: Really? What was the Budget Control Act about? What was this legislation that passed not only the Senate on a vote of 74 to 26 but passed the House of Representatives, which is controlled by the other party, and was signed by the President of the United States?

Republican rhetoric aside, Congress did pass a budget—not through the normal way of a budget resolution but through an actual law. The Republican-controlled House passed it, the Democratic Senate passed it, and the President signed it.

The Budget Control Act set 10 years of spending caps, established a 2-year “deeming” resolution to enforce spending levels, and it created a reconciliation-like process to consider entitlement and tax reform.

I hope we have laid this issue to rest. So now if I hear colleagues come out and say that we have not had a budget for 1,000 days—I will know they have been put on fair notice. Maybe they missed somehow what they were voting on back in August. Maybe they gapped out. Maybe they forgot. But you know what, they voted for it. Every Member of the Senate voted on the Budget Control Act. Seventy-four to twenty-six—

add it up—that is 100. Everybody was here. And if they did not know what they were voting on, now they do. So if I hear another assertion that there has not been a budget for 1,000 days, I will know and the listeners will know that somebody is not telling the truth.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### REMEMBERING JARED FRANCOM

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, today I rise with a heavy heart to mourn the loss of Ogden police officer Jared Francom.

Earlier this month, on the evening of January 4, 2012, Agent Francom was senselessly gunned down defending his fellow officers as they attempted to serve a search warrant in Ogden, UT. Five other officers—Sean Grogan, Kasey Burrell, Michael Rounkles, Nate Hutchinson, and Jason Venderwarf—were wounded in the gun battle.

A week later, a crowd of roughly 4,000 family members, friends, and supporters, including more than 1,000 uniformed officers, gathered at a public memorial for Jared to say goodbye to one of America's fallen heroes. The sentiment from all who knew him was the same: Jared was a devoted family man, a dedicated father to his two young daughters, a fun-loving brother and son to his family.

At the funeral, which I attended, I heard Jared's brother Ben say that he “taught people to care for each other and taught others to change the world like he was doing on the streets of Ogden.” Commenting on the outpouring of support, Jared's brother Travis said: “I know my brother would be proud, because we all are his family.”

Achieving a goal he had set for himself as a young boy, Agent Francom became a member of the Ogden police force 7 years ago and was assigned to the Weber-Morgan Narcotics Strike Force.

Jared's sacrifice should be a reminder to us of the incredible risks our brave law enforcement officers all take as they protect the people they serve. I have a deep and unwavering respect for the law enforcement community, and as a former assistant U.S. attorney I have seen up close how these men and women serve with honor, integrity, and dedication. Jared Francom was no exception. He will be remembered for giving his life in service to the people and to the community he loved.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.