

Some here would roll back funding for international development programs, which help to create political stability in conflict-prone regions and build markets for U.S. exports, on the grounds that these funds would be better spent at home.

They miss the point. Ninety-nine percent of the Federal budget is spent on domestic programs. The notion that somehow the wealthiest, most powerful nation on Earth is an island, and that we can ignore what is happening in the world around us is foolhardy, and is dangerous.

JOHN KERRY understands this, and he knows that appropriations begin with Congress. In times of close scrutiny of all aspects of the Federal budget and fierce competition for funds among Federal agencies, he will need to make his case up here repeatedly, and I will work with him to do that. We have to convince Congress and the American people why the State Department's budget is important. As Secretary of State one can have the best policies and the best plans to implement them. But if you don't have the resources, if you don't have the people to do it, the best plans in the world don't go very far.

Secretary Clinton has done an outstanding job. I have told her that I stand in awe of what she has accomplished throughout the world and within the State Department. We all owe her a debt of gratitude for her steady hand and tireless energy as Secretary of State. I have traveled with her to other countries. I have seen how she approaches problems, always prepared and with such energy. Every American should be proud to be represented by her. She has done an extraordinary job in reintroducing America to the world after the missteps following 9/11 that caused so much damage to our image and authority abroad.

Her successor also has not only a hard act to follow, but he also understands, as we all do, that America must continuously demonstrate to the rest of the world what we stand for as a people.

I believe the Congress and the American people, and I think, in a way, the world, is fortunate to have a nominee for the position as qualified as Senator KERRY. I will enthusiastically vote for him when his name comes before the Senate.

Madam President, seeing no other person seeking recognition, as President pro tempore of this body, I am glad to see you in the role of Presiding Officer. I realize you can't respond to this, but in your first month in the Senate you are actually filling the pivotal role in this body, and I appreciate it.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the period of morning business be extended until 3:30 p.m. today, and that all provisions of the previous order remain in effect.

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

#### THE DEBT LIMIT

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I rise today to, No. 1, welcome you and welcome all of the other new Senators who have just joined this historic body.

Along with the rest of us, you have all watched the difficult negotiations over the fiscal cliff that dominated the last few weeks of the 112th Congress. That debate was an important opportunity to talk to the American people about Washington's addiction to spending. We made clear in that debate that no amount of tax increases—no amount—would come close to wiping out Washington's debt. So as we begin the 113th Congress, we are faced with fresh opportunities to continue that conversation with the American people.

This time the debate is over whether to raise the Nation's debt limit. Last week, the President opened negotiations on this important issue by saying that he wouldn't negotiate. He did not announce this by calling the Republicans in Congress; he did it, instead, by calling a press conference.

In the last days of 2012, President Obama, in my opinion, failed to lead in the talks over avoiding the fiscal cliff. Now the President plans not to lead on the Nation's debt limit either. Whether the President leads, follows, or just gets out of the way, Washington needs real budget reform. We can't continue President Obama's pattern of untold trillions of dollars in wasteful government spending.

Over the past 4 years, President Obama has added so much to our national debt that he has already had to increase our Nation's debt limit four separate times. This includes the two largest increases in our history. No other President of the United States has needed an increase of over \$1 trillion. President Obama has asked for that much twice. While he once promised to cut the deficit in half by now, he has done just the opposite. He has added as much debt in 4 years as all the previous Presidents racked up in our country's first 225 years.

President Obama has maxed out the national credit card and now he wants a new one. In return, the President isn't willing to offer any commitments that he will try to be more responsible with that next credit card. In fact, under his latest budget, the President wants to add another \$6.4 trillion to our debt over the next 5 years. That is

the wrong direction for our Federal budget and for the Nation's future.

The President could take this opportunity to reassure hardworking American taxpayers, as well as world financial markets, that he is finally serious about reining in Washington's out-of-control spending. Instead, he has chosen to try to score political points.

This isn't the first time the President has voiced an opinion on the debt limit debate. Last December, he spoke on this subject as he, in my opinion, misrepresented decades of precedence regarding congressional consideration of the debt limit. He said that connecting debt ceiling votes and budget negotiations—connecting debt ceiling votes and budget negotiations—was something that “we had never done in our history until we did it last year.”

That statement is false. Frankly, we should be talking about responsible spending reform every time we debate any measure in Congress that involves spending money. We should certainly do it when we are debating borrowing more money.

The debt limit has been used at least 20 times in the past 60 years specifically tied to debating fiscal reform. For example, in 1954, Congress passed a temporary increase specifically as a way to control future finances. In 1967, the House actually defeated a debt limit increase so that it could force President Johnson to quit using some of the budget tricks he had been using. In 1970, the debate over the debt limit included amendments to cut defense spending, imposing a spending cap, and freezing congressional pay until Congress passed a balanced budget.

In 1983, Congress actually defeated a debt limit increase bill. Senator Russell Long, a Democrat, told his colleagues if they voted for the increase, “you are voting to continue the biggest deficits in the history of this country as far as the eye can see.”

Incidentally, the debt at that time was \$1.3 trillion. That is about how much we have added to our debt every year since President Obama was sworn in for the first time. Democrats balked at Washington having a debt over \$1.3 trillion back then. Today, the President says Republicans are doing something irresponsible for even wanting to talk about a debt of more than \$16.4 trillion.

I could go on and on with more examples, but I think you have the idea. The President says it is unprecedented for us to even ask to have this debate. Well, the President is not correct. It is not unprecedented. It is actually very common and absolutely appropriate.

There is nobody on the Republican side of the aisle here in the Senate who is saying we should not pay our bills. There is also nobody on this side of the aisle who thinks we should keep wasting taxpayer dollars without even trying to act responsibly and slow down Washington's spending. Yes, the debt limit is about paying for past obligations, but our history shows the debate