

ever be delivered by the Congress of the United States, if we do actually disarm, if we end all of our nuclear weapons program, if we do everything that the Security Council has asked of us. Would the United States lift the series of sanctions that they have ultimately passed upon us?

This Congress cannot agree with the President. When I say this Congress, I speak of the Republican Congress and the House of Representatives.

It is a dangerous message in the world. We tell other nations that we believe they have to abide by certain disciplines, and yet we cannot ultimately keep our own budget open and the Nation and this government functioning.

I think this is the ultimate extortion. I believe that since this is by design, not by chance, it is going to have real consequences for our Nation. There is no doubt that if there is a prolonged shutdown, it will be consequential to our economy. It will be consequential to the gross domestic product.

We saw that 17 years ago. It will be consequential to not only Wall Street but to Main Street in terms of their confidence as to how to move forward. This economy is in recovery. The last thing it needs is a body blow by its own government as it tries to continue to grow an economy in which more people can be employed.

The consequence of Republicans doing this is more than a government shutdown, it is increasingly an economic shutdown. This is simply something that we should not accept.

Finally, to send us a resolution after 6 months of trying to go to a conference, 18 different petitions and motions on this floor to go to a conference, to go to that simple meeting that might have reconciled these differences that were objected to by certain Republicans within this chairman—and now to say you are going to send us a motion to go to conference when you have shut down the government and, therefore, have a gun at our head in order to be able to try to negotiate the critical issues that might be negotiated—is simply unacceptable. They already have a legislative victory.

We have accepted an amount in the temporary budget that is less than what we devised in the Senate budget, \$80 billion less. Yet that is not satisfactory to them.

This is not about the economics. This is about their drive to kill the Affordable Care Act in a way that undermines the health and quality of opportunity for millions of Americans who finally don't have to worry about pre-existing conditions. They don't have to worry about lifetime caps, can keep their children on their insurance until the age of 26, and can get millions of dollars across the landscape of the country for seniors to reduce prescription drug costs, that finally controls costs in this Nation. Their fear is not

that it won't work. Their fear is that it will succeed and in doing so will undermine the very essence of what they have been against all along.

That is a hard way to pursue a political tactic as a consequence of the Nation's laws. This is what is going on here today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. We are in, as has been said by Leader REID and my good friend from New Jersey, an unfortunate moment. There are millions of people who are innocent. They wake up in the morning, work hard, and hope to get a paycheck to help feed and clothe their families. They will not be getting a paycheck tomorrow morning.

They might be Federal Government workers. I have heard some of my colleagues on the other side demonize the Federal Government. When I think of the Federal Government, I think of individual people who are working hard, who show up at work in the rain and the snow, who work hard, as do people in the private sector, people who work for State governments or such as the people who work for us. Why should they be punished?

Then there are so many others, such as the veteran who needs a change in his or her disability formula and can't get it; the construction worker who is working on a federally funded highway, or somebody who works in a defense plant, as a civilian, all of these people now have been put at real risk.

There is an answer, as I mentioned in my colloquy with the leader. The answer is for the House to pass the bill that passed here—the key vote had a majority of Democrats and Republicans, 25 Republicans—and keep the government running.

They are busy working late at night on another little subterfuge, a little scheme. Have a conference.

As the leader said, conferences are fine with us. We tried to do a budget conference 18 times. Don't do a conference as a charade while you are shutting the government down. That is what the other side is asking us to do.

Let's modify what they are doing. Let them pass the bill that is now in the House that will keep the government running until November 15, and then we will have a conference on how to fund the government for another year.

Make no mistake about it. Tomorrow morning their next gambit will be defeated in the Senate and then we will be back where we were, where we are now.

There is a bill, a ready bill, in the House of Representatives that can keep the government funded and prevent these millions of innocent people and our national economy from being hurt and hurt significantly.

This is a final plea, at 12:15 a.m., 15 minutes after the government has been officially closed. House Members, Speaker BOEHNER, let the bill come up

for a vote. It will pass. It will save such trouble, and, even worse. For millions of innocent Americans it will save our economy from great risk. Then we can go back to debating the many issues that you and we wish to debate.

With that, with a bit of a heavy heart because it didn't have to happen, that we have a small group of people who are so sure that they are right that they can hurt millions to pursue that righteousness, that self-righteousness, is a bad thing. I hope it doesn't happen again.

I yield the floor.

---

## MORNING BUSINESS

---

### SYRIA

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, last Friday I was reading the press reports about the remarkable progress that has taken place at the United Nations in obtaining a legally binding resolution, with the support of Russia and the other members of the Security Council, to eliminate Syria's chemical weapons. I could not help but compare it to what has been happening here in the Congress over the past week and a half.

While Secretary of State Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov have worked diligently to reach a historic agreement to destroy one of the world's largest arsenals of poison gas, the Congress has been consumed by political theater, debating an utterly pointless, politically motivated, doomed attempt to defund the Affordable Care Act. In doing so we are now perilously close to a shutdown of the Federal government that will cause untold damage to innumerable programs on which States, municipalities, and every community and family in this country depend and cost the taxpayers far more than if the government stays open.

Ironically, while just 2 weeks ago Congress was on the verge of authorizing a military attack against Syria, some of the most vocal advocates of an attack are the same Members who are toying with a government shutdown that could make it harder for the United States to help implement the U.N. resolution to destroy Syria's chemical weapons. If the government stops functioning, it will no longer be able to pay the salaries of our diplomats, nor to provide the funds to help pay for the weapons inspectors and the removal and destruction of the weapons.

I commend President Obama, Secretary Kerry, and our new U.N. Ambassador Samantha Power for their extraordinary efforts. We should also recognize the indispensable cooperation of Minister Lavrov and his government. While it will be many months before we know if this agreement will be faithfully implemented and achieve its goals in Syria, it is a dramatic step forward.

I also commend President Obama and Secretary Kerry for their efforts to