

Army Materiel Command, Aviation and Missile Command, Security Assistance Command, Contracting Command, Expeditionary Contracting Command, Space and Missile Defense Command, and numerous other program executive offices, agencies, and centers.

According to the Department of Defense, “of the Department’s 800,000 civilian workers, about half will be furloughed.” That means President Obama, our Commander in Chief, in his sole discretion, publicly declared that roughly 400,000 DOD civilian employees are not “essential” to America’s national security.

While I disagree and question why any Commander in Chief would, in his sole discretion, slight 400,000 defense workers by declaring them superfluous to America’s national security, that is not why I address the House of Representatives today. What I want to know is: Why do President Obama, Democrat Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID, and their allies pointlessly insist on shutting down the DOD?

Let me elaborate.

On June 14, 2013, almost 4 months ago, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1960, the National Defense Authorization Act, on a 315–108 bipartisan vote; 103 House Democrats, a Democrat majority, joined 212 Republicans to pass the National Defense Authorization Act.

On July 24, 2013, almost 3 months ago, the House passed H.R. 2397, the Defense appropriations bill on a 315–109 bipartisan vote; 95 House Democrats joined 220 Republicans in passing the Defense appropriations bill.

I publicly thank the House Democrats who supported the programs and funding that help America’s warfighters protect American lives. Collectively, these defense bills restore funding lost because of sequestration and fully fund America’s military and national defense. If these defense bills become law, then national defense is exempt from President Obama’s shutdown orders.

Unfortunately, there is an unhappy ending to the House’s bipartisan support for national defense. Democrat Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID needlessly obstructs votes on both bills, thus causing them to languish 3 and 4 months in the United States Senate.

Senate intransigence means the Department of Defense is subject to President Obama’s shutdown orders and 400,000 defense workers are, as of today, barred from helping our warfighters who risk their lives for America both here and abroad. Each day these 400,000 defense workers do not work is another day America’s warfighters are without their help, is another delay that denies our warfighters the cutting edge in high-tech weaponry needed to defeat America’s enemies with minimal loss of life.

Mr. Speaker, Democrat Senator HARRY REID should stop his obstruc-

tionism and allow a vote—just a vote—on the defense bills that have passed the House of Representatives with bipartisan support. If he does, both bills will pass and become law and national defense will be fully funded and exempt from President Obama’s shutdown orders.

Mr. Speaker, the Senate, White House, and Congress agree on close to 99 percent of our appropriations bills. The White House and Senate must stop using a Federal Government shutdown and the loss of 400,000 national defense jobs to coerce the House of Representatives into spending money America does not have on a socialized medicine program that does not work and that a majority of Americans do not want. The responsible thing to do is to fund the 99 percent, end the Federal Government shutdown, and then debate and negotiate the 1 percent that we legitimately disagree on.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Democrat Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID to join our bipartisan House effort to compromise—yes, compromise—and pass the National Defense Authorization Act and Defense appropriations bill, thereby securing America’s national security while at the same time restoring 400,000 jobs America’s economy sorely needs.

WE NEED LEADERSHIP, NOT THE BLAME GAME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. BERA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BERA of California. Mr. Speaker, day No. 3—day No. 3—of a government shutdown that doesn’t need to happen.

Mr. Speaker, we need leadership, we don’t need the blame game, and yet that is what we are seeing. Republicans blaming Democrats, Democrats blaming Republicans, the House blaming the Senate, the Senate blaming the House, and the House blaming the President.

That isn’t getting us anywhere. And to the American people, they’re not saying: Oh, it’s the Democrats’ fault or it’s the Republicans’ fault. They’re looking at Congress and saying: Why can’t you do your job? Why can’t you come together as Democrats and Republicans, bring your best ideas forward and compromise and negotiate?

What this House is doing, what Congress is doing, is reckless. It’s irresponsible. We need to start putting the American people’s interests first because they’re the ones that we work for. That’s who sent us here.

We’re not asking anyone to give up their convictions. We all have our convictions, and we all have our districts and the people back home. What we’re asking for, the Members in this body, the Republicans and the Democrats, is to think about the country. Now is the time for us to put the American people first. That means we’ve got to be able to come forward and understand and learn how to listen. It’s hurting real people.

I’m a doctor by training, and I look at this from the perspective of being a doctor and the American patients. As reported in my hometown newspaper, the Sacramento Bee, at my hometown hospital where I’m still a clinical professor, UC Davis Medical Center, here is what they said:

For cancer patients, government help—in the form of clinical trials sponsored by the National Cancer Institute—can be a matter of life and death. And the NCI, a Federal agency, has closed its doors for the duration.

One of my colleagues, Dr. David Gandara, a UC Davis Cancer Center lung cancer specialist, said this:

We have California patients from our center who have been going through clinical trials there and have been told to go home. The program has been shut down.

Now, I know yesterday you brought a bill to the floor, a resolution that restored partial funding to the NIH for 3 months, through December. But as a doctor, cancer patients are not looking at 3 months. They need some certainty. We need some certainty in the practice of medicine when we’re sitting with our patients. So I implore this body to come together as Democrats and Republicans to think about those patients and to think about those Americans who are being hurt by our inability to do our job.

Now, as a Democrat, I’m going to continue talking to my Republican colleagues and looking at ways that we can move forward, but inflammatory rhetoric and the blame game is not going to get us anywhere. We’ve got to learn how to listen to one another, we’ve got to learn how to speak to one another, and we’ve got to learn how to put the American people ahead of political parties. That’s who we work for.

The oath I took as a doctor is borne on a foundation of two solid principles: benevolence, to do good; nonmalfeasance, to do no harm.

Mr. Speaker, Congress’ inability to get the job done is doing irreparable harm to Americans and to American patients, and we certainly are not doing any good by not getting a budget put together and getting America back on track. Let’s do our job. Let’s do what the American people sent us here to do. Let’s work together as Republicans and Democrats and learn how to listen to one another again and do the work of the American public.

Mr. Speaker, the public is watching.

THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH HAS OFFENDED WORLD WAR II VETERANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, I am pleased to hear the gentleman from California from the other side of the aisle who just spoke and his willingness to work together. I think that’s the kind of cooperation that the American people are looking for and that Congress needs to adhere to in coming together and resolving this.

No one wants a shutdown. No one wants to see vital and essential government programs eliminated or withheld from the public. Sometimes in these situations that are most difficult, you actually become concerned about basic common sense or, again, the attempts of certain people to try to embarrass each side.

I think one of the worst things I've seen in my service was the closedown of some of our memorials. This probably won't show up for my colleagues very well, but this is the Martin Luther King Memorial. You just walk up and look at it. But to deploy Interior and park personnel to put out barriers to constrain the public from even walking is an absolutely senseless and mindless bureaucratic move.

Many people saw also the construction. And this, again, is not a very good photo, but this is Park personnel that were deployed putting fences up in front of the Lincoln Memorial and then, most offensively, to put barriers to block, in an open-air park memorial, our World War II veterans' memorial. This is senseless.

I have talked to Mr. ISSA and the Oversight subcommittee that I chair—Mr. ISSA chairs the whole Oversight Committee of Congress. I know Mr. HASTINGS is going to look into this, his Natural Resources Committee. But this is a senseless offense to the American people and particularly our veterans and others, there is no reason for this. So some common sense has to prevail in all of this.

We will get beyond this. People will be made whole. It is unfortunate that sometimes government, whether it was back in Washington's days or throughout our history, does work on a brinkmanship basis and does not get to a resolution, particularly when you come to difficult times.

My colleagues, we are at one of the most difficult times in history. Within the next 2 weeks, the United States of America will be at our debt limit. We'll be \$17 trillion in debt. They're going to come and ask for another trillion dollars for a year to keep us from being a deadbeat Nation.

How did we get here? That's part of the question that has to be resolved here. You had an era of unprecedented spending, 4 years in which the other side—and these are facts—took control. They spent \$1.5 trillion more than they took in the first year in office—1.4 trillion, 1.3 trillion, and so on and so on, until we've gone from \$9 trillion in debt to 17, reaching 18, almost double in 5 or 6 years. That's unsustainable. So that's what this is about.

It's also about a health care program. I come from a family that at times didn't have health care. And many Americans need health care, and we should be able to provide them, but people didn't ask for a bureaucracy. People didn't ask for thousands of bureaucrats here to manage a government program. They didn't ask for IRS enforcers. They didn't ask for many of

the mandates that are in this bill that can and need to be revised.

The President has already revised the law. The President said he didn't need the Congress, as you will recall, some time ago, and obviously he hasn't. He changed some of the terms, given exemptions to employers, put that off for a year, which was part of the law. We've asked—and, again, some of us wanted it repealed. Some of us didn't like it, but we now have it. We need to revise it, and we need to make certain that Americans have good health care and access to affordable care, but not with bureaucracy.

We've offered at least three alternatives and some changes, the last one pretty simple, to delay for a while the individual mandate, like we've done for others. So we can do this and we must do this. We must succeed for the American people.

BUDGET CONFERENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, we are now on our third day of the Republican shutdown of the Federal Government. My constituents and people all across this country are disgusted with what they're seeing, the absence of an agreement on a simple idea: the American people have a right to a government that is open to serve them, but our government is closed. Eight hundred thousand men and women across the country have been placed on furlough because Speaker BOEHNER and the House Republican leadership will not bring up a clean continuing resolution to fund the government and keep the government open.

Now, I would like to talk a little bit about what that means for my constituents, and first to say that I have extended office hours in my district office from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. to make sure that my constituents have whatever help I can provide during this government shutdown to help navigate through the Federal Government, and that is staffed by my employees who have no guaranty they will even be paid.

But I want to talk this morning about how we got here, not to assign blame to one side or the other but to suggest how we move forward, because we've heard from the Speaker these last few days and from many of the Republican leaders they just want to compromise; if the Democrats would just be willing to compromise and go to a conference committee, this would all work out, and that Republicans are interested in delaying health care reform and cutting spending and the Democrats refuse to negotiate on these issues.

Well, this is actually completely false. In fact, look at this chart. We began with spending in the President's budget of \$1.2 trillion. You can see how

far there has already been compromise from the Democrats down from the enacted spending to the Ryan budget to the Senate budget and finally to the continuing resolution, which is very close to the Ryan budget—not a budget amount that we agree with but some people would be willing to compromise on.

In fact, there was a budget that was passed by the House, a budget passed by the Senate, and we passed No Budget, No Pay, which I was a cosponsor of, to make sure this budget process proceeded; but the Speaker has refused, since that happened, to appoint conferees to a Budget Committee. That's the next step. That's how we get a budget, to appoint conferees who then have the responsibility of working out compromises.

We wrote to the Speaker back in April, April 17. Here's a copy of the letter. Ranking Member CHRIS VAN HOLLEN and I wrote to the Speaker urging him to appoint conferees so we could continue the budget process, but he's refused to do that.

Then, just moments before the shutdown happened, Republicans said: Oh, let's go to conference on the funding bill, the continuing resolution, not on the budget. That, of course, was a vote to shut down the government, because that wasn't going to happen in 45 minutes. And so the government shut down, and this is now day three.

You have to wonder: Why is it that the Republicans have refused to pass a clean funding bill that we are calling for? Well, one member of the House Republican caucus said:

Now that we've jumped off the cliff and lit ourselves on fire, we've entered the valley of the shadow of death. We've got to keep running and hold together.

Mr. Speaker, our country is facing very serious challenges today. Men and women in cities and towns all across our country don't know where to find work, don't know if they're going to be able to go to work. Seniors are nervous about whether they can rely on Social Security and Medicare, and young people are worried about whether they can afford to go to college. These issues are far too important for Republicans to refuse to negotiate simply as a matter of pride. Every Member of this House needs to put aside political posturing and act in the best interests of the people who sent us here.

Rather than coming together to support commonsense solutions and policies that would strengthen our country, Speaker BOEHNER and the Republicans have decided to shut down the Federal Government until they're able to undermine the Affordable Care Act. For them, it has become an obsession.

Earlier this week, one House Republican called the Affordable Care Act "the most insidious law known to man." House Republicans compared this debate to the terrorist attacks of September 11. And when he held the floor for 21 hours, Senator TED CRUZ invoked the horrors of World War II and