

What the House has done with their “Alice in Wonderland” operation is they created another Sandy. It could be \$55 billion.

Although this is not an act of nature; this is a manmade disaster. It is a manmade disaster waiting to happen for national security.

The tea party shutdown is hampering our ability to enforce sanctions on Iran, just when they are beginning to bite hard.

The tea party shutdown is hurting our ability to gather intelligence. I spoke about that today. According to the Chief of Staff of the Army, the tea party shutdown is impacting the day-to-day operations of the United States Armed Forces. If the chief of the Army were not enough, the Secretary of Defense ridiculed what the House is doing. By the way, Secretary Hagel is a Republican.

I know my Republican colleagues are as concerned about the safety and security of the United States as I am. But they need to take a look at themselves and ask are they doing what is right for the safety and security of our country.

I am confident if they thought about it for a minute, they would like to mitigate the impact of the shutdown on intelligence gathering, the military, and a dozen other government agencies, as much as I do. A piecemeal approach to funding the government bit by bit is simply not the answer. Saying: We are going to pay you when we open this place is not the answer. Let them go to work.

No matter how many bites the Republicans take at the apple, there is only one bill that ensures every priority is met: the Senate bill to fully reopen the Federal Government.

Why are they doing this?

The Presiding Officer is a distinguished attorney from the State of Hawaii.

One does not need to be a distinguished attorney from any place to understand how brazen what they are doing is. They are saying: We are not going to do anything until you let us hamper a bill that has already been around for 4 years.

Hamper is an understatement. They are not willing to do anything unless they take a big whack with a meat-ax on ObamaCare. Already, since ObamaCare has been open, only on the Federal Web site, there have been 9 million hits in 4 days.

The priorities the Republicans have addressed so far are: Veterans, national parks, National Guard, and the National Institutes of Health are worthy. But there are many other needs that will go unmet and priorities that will be ignored without fully reopening the government.

Take, for example—I haven’t heard any speeches on the floor from my Republican colleagues about 1,300 rape crisis centers which rely on Federal funding to support victims of crime. They are losing their ability to stay open.

Unless the Federal Government reopens, organizations that advocate for victims of violence will be forced to close their doors or work without pay, and that is in a matter of a few days. Will the House Republicans pass a bill to help them?

I remember when we didn’t have all the domestic shelters we have now. I remember these women as I did domestic relations work. Oh, how sad. They had no place to go. Now they have a few places to go. We have domestic crisis shelters, and we have rape crisis centers, but the Federal Government is the one that supports those. The piecemeal approach of the House indicates that the needs of the people I just described would not be met.

The commander in chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, William Thein—I hope everyone here understands this is not some leftwing organization out there demonstrating against Democrats. The Veterans of Foreign Wars is what I have described it as, veterans of foreign wars. They try to stay as neutral politically as any organization in America.

William Thein, commander in chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, wrote to leaders in Congress this week and said:

We expect more from our elected leadership, and not a piecemeal approach that would use the military or disabled veterans as leverage in a political game.

He is right. Neither veterans, the military, hungry infants nor children with cancer should be used as political pawns. They should not be left out in the cold.

There is only one bill. It is the bill that Speaker BOEHNER asked me to get out of this Senate, and we did that. He needs to allow the House of Representatives to vote, and it would pass by a huge margin. That bill would fund all public priorities I have talked about, both to protect and economy and national security.

The Senate’s clean bill to reopen the government—the one the Speaker said he wanted me to get out of here—and I did it, but it was not easy. We have been waiting 1 week, but the Speaker could end this government shutdown before they go home Sunday. It was the Speaker’s intention all along to pass a clean continuing resolution. I believe that. But instead he was waylaid by this tea party-driven nonsense in the House of Representatives. He has refused to allow a vote on a bill that he proposed.

Republican Congressman CHARLES DENT said last night:

I do believe it’s imperative that we have a clean funding bill to fund the government. That was the intent of the Republican leadership all along, but obviously there were a few dozen folks in the House Republican Conference who weren’t prepared to vote for a clean bill, and that’s why we’re in the situation we’re in right now.

I say to the Speaker: Go with your first instinct. Pass a clean continuing resolution.

CHARLIE DENT said it was to pass and fund the government.

Here is what one House Republican, DEVIN NUNES of California said: The Speaker is taking his orders straight from the junior Senator from Texas. But the next move would be—and this is what is Congressman NUNES said yesterday:

You really have to call Cruz. I’m not even joking about that. That’s really what you have to do, because he is the one that set up the strategy. He’s the one that got us into this mess, and so we’ve got to know what the next move is.

Stop taking marching orders from the tea party, I say to my Republican friends in the House. All the Speaker has to do is find the courage to defy the tea party for the good of our great country.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for debate only until 4 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The President pro tempore is recognized.

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I thank the distinguished majority leader, not only for how he spoke out today, but also for the fact that he is strong on this issue. He also spoke about what this shutdown is doing to law enforcement.

As chairman of the Judiciary Committee, I am going to speak further on that. But I couldn’t help but think, as I was asked by a friend in Vermont: What is going on?

I said: Well, you know, we had hundreds of hours of committee meetings, votes, and all. We had hours and hours of debate in the House and the Senate, and we passed the Affordable Care Act.

Even though it passed the House and the Senate and was signed into law by the President, however, the Tea Party continues to oppose the law. So they did two things that they thought would knock it out. One, they went to a Republican dominated U.S. Supreme Court and said let’s knock out this law. The Supreme Court said no. They upheld the law.

Then they ran a candidate for President of the United States, whose main argument was that he would get rid of the Affordable Care Act.

He lost badly.

Throughout all this time and after 40 votes to get rid of the Affordable Care Act, the Republicans have not offered what we would get as an alternative? Most parents like the fact that their