

from. I have said: If you will pare that down from 50 to 25, then I am sure it would be reasonable for the Democrats to have 25. That is a total of 50. Probably it would end up being maybe 20 recorded votes if you, our Republicans, are willing to bring that number down and say: Yes, we will go forward with this bill if we can have 25—move it down from 50 to 25. Now, if we refuse to do that, I am going to go ahead and vote to support cloture and to support our bill.

On the other hand, if Senator TOOMEY and the rest of the Republicans say: No, we want to have all 50—and I look at this list, and I see we have some Members who have as many as 9, and I do not think that is being totally reasonable—so if they say: No, we are not going to bring our number down to 25, then I am going to support the bill. However, if they do agree to bring it down—and I have already talked to the majority side about this—and they refuse to come down to 25, then I would join in opposing cloture on the bill when it comes up.

So I want to make sure there is no misunderstanding right now. I would like to say that I could get ahold of everyone tonight. I have tried. They said at 7:30 they are going to make a decision. It is 7:29 now, so I had to get on record. I do not have time.

I will repeat it one more time. If the Republicans refuse to bring their number down to 25, then I will go ahead and support the bill and support passage of the bill through cloture. If they do agree to do it and the Democratic side, the majority side, decides they are not going to accept the 25 offer, then I will oppose and vote against cloture on the bill.

There you have it.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014—Continued

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a cloture motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 1197, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2014 for military activities of the Department of

Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Carl Levin, Richard J. Durbin, Tim Kaine, Dianne Feinstein, Kay R. Hagan, Barbara A. Mikulski, Joe Donnelly, Mark Udall, Claire McCaskill, Christopher A. Coons, Jeanne Shaheen, Mark R. Warner, Jack Reed, Patty Murray, Bill Nelson, Angus S. King, Jr.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum required under rule XXII be waived.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

BUDGETARY IMPACTS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it has been only a few short weeks since the needless government shutdown that cost the Treasury more than \$20 billion, disrupted the lives of hundreds of thousands of Federal workers and their families in every State, threatened to wreak havoc with the world's financial markets, and accomplished nothing.

But an important deadline, one critical to determining how we resolve the current budget crisis, is just a few days away. While this approaching deadline does not come with the threat of another government shutdown, if Congress is going to complete work on appropriations bills before the continuing resolution expires on January 15, we need a top-line number from the budget conferees by the end of this week.

By Friday, the budget conferees need to find enough common ground to agree on a level to fund the Federal Government for the remainder of the fiscal year. While many have expressed their doubts, there is no reason this cannot be done. People are fed up with putting the process of setting and funding our national priorities on autopilot. It is an abdication of responsibility and a wasteful way to do business.

It is equally important that the level of funding replace sequestration. A long-term continuing resolution that funds the government at the House level of \$967 billion would be a disaster. Sequestration would become the new normal, funding programs and agencies at levels far below those passed by the Senate Appropriations Committee and below fiscal year 2013.

It is stunning—and frightening—that instead of looking to replace sequestration's devastating cuts, we hear from some Members that it is "working." If their intention is to stunt the eco-

nomics recovery and indiscriminately slash services upon which American families and businesses depend, then I guess they are right. But I don't think most Members of Congress, or most Americans, see it that way.

For those of us who want to support our communities and invigorate and sustain our economic recovery, another year of sequestration would be catastrophic. While we are still trying to gauge the full impact of the first round of cuts this year, one thing is clear—another year would be far worse.

Agencies have exhausted their carry-over funds and creative budgeting options to avoid layoffs, furloughs, and eliminating programs.

Absent a budget agreement, the entire Federal Government, from the Department of Defense to the Department of Labor, will suffer significant, mindless cuts. I have spoken several times about the impact of another full year continuing resolution at the House's funding level.

I want to take a minute to describe what it would mean for America's children, teachers, and families. LIHEAP, which provides lifesaving home energy assistance, would not receive the \$325 million increase over the level included in a continuing resolution, cutting off assistance to about 760,000 more households this winter and next summer. Nearly 40,000 Vermont families rely on LIHEAP in the cold Vermont winters.

Early Head Start Programs won't be expanded as the Senate appropriations bill intended, and the 177,000 children who would have received Head Start services will be turned away. Nearly 1,600 Vermont children depend on this assistance every year.

Schools around the country already facing budget shortfalls look to the Federal Government to fund services to disadvantaged children through title I grants. Those schools would not receive the \$852 million included in the Senate appropriations bill. They would have to look elsewhere for money to provide those services to 1.3 million students in need.

Schools would also lose \$748 million in grants for special education that were included in the Senate appropriations bill, to help cover the costs of employing more than 9,000 additional special education aides in our schools.

NIH would not receive the \$2 billion in additional funds included in the Senate appropriations bill and instead would not be able to award 1,300 new research grants. This means that 1,300 additional opportunities to achieve scientific advances that could lead to lifesaving treatments and cures would be missed opportunities.

Under a continuing resolution, 159,000 families looking for assistance through the section 8 housing program to help keep a roof over their heads will be turned away because the funding won't be there. In Vermont, 774 families would face losing their housing assistance.