

The Gabriella Miller Kids First Research Act will require the director of the National Institutes of Health to allocate \$126 million—\$12.6 million each year for 10 years—of appropriated funds for pediatric research. The money would be allocated into needed research grants for pediatric autism, cancer and other diseases.

The fight for funding pediatric research is far from over but this is a step in the right direction. As Gabriella said, “You may have a bad day today, but there’s always a bright shining star to look forward to tomorrow.” It is my hope that this legislation will help fund research that leads to future treatments and cures.

I would like to thank Senator MARK WARNER and Senator ORRIN HATCH for supporting this legislation and Congressman CANTOR for championing the bill through the House of Representatives.

This bipartisan effort is about making sure pediatric disease research is a high priority. I am proud we were able to pass legislation that honors Gabriella Miller, her family, and her inspiring work as an advocate for pediatric disease research.

GABRIELLA MILLER KIDS FIRST RESEARCH SAVINGS ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 289, H.R. 2019.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

An act (H.R. 2019) to eliminate taxpayer financing of political party conventions and reprogram savings to provide for a 10-year pediatric research initiative through the Common Fund administered by the National Institutes of Health, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measure?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I reserve the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we on this side accept this measure, but I do have a few things I want to say before saying there is no objection.

Sequestration cut \$1.6 billion from NIH last year—\$1.6 billion. In the omnibus we passed, we gave them current level funding, but that hole for NIH is still there. NIH has lost huge amounts of money over the past few years in the way that we have struggled to get financing for our country. We in the past have been the guiding light for research on diseases and conditions. We are still there, but we are losing ground. Every country in the world looks at the NIH as a place they would like to be.

This is a small amount of money, but it will be extremely helpful to the NIH.

I would hope my Republican colleagues would join with us in increas-

ing funding for the National Institutes of Health.

Senator DURBIN is going to introduce a bill today that will fund NIH at levels they need to be funded. It has to be paid for, but it is so very important that we not claim victory for the NIH because of this. It is a small victory and I accept that. I think it is extremely important that we understand the NIH is billions of dollars short of being able to maintain the place they have had in years past.

I repeat, they have been losing ground. The last 5 years have been extremely tough for them. We need to do better for the National Institutes of Health. We have scientists around our country who want to do good work. They want to devote their lives to medical research, but they are not applying for these grants. So many of them are turned down that they are basically—well, maybe I won’t even bother trying.

I am pleased to hear the Republican leader move forward. It is something that is a small step forward to help children who badly need help in the ways of these diseases, which are so difficult for the kids, of course, for the parents and families and certainly our country.

Again, before we leave this issue, I would hope that the appropriations process we are going to go through this year will help us get money. What we have done today is only an authorization, and the public out there should understand it is only an authorization. Until we have appropriations going, there will be nothing going to pediatric research at the National Institutes of Health. We have to carry forward and not have all of these banner headlines that the kids are going to suddenly get help they deserve. That will not happen until we appropriate money for this.

I do not object.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid on the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 2019) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I wish to reiterate what we have done. H.R. 2019, which will now go to the President for signature—the original author is Majority Leader ERIC CANTOR in the House—will eliminate taxpayer financing of political party conventions and reprogram savings to provide for a 10-year pediatric research initiative through the Common Fund administered by the NIH.

GLOBAL WARMING

Mr. President, our friends on the other side who run the Senate spent a lot of time talking last night. I am not sure what any of it accomplished. The

reviews seem to be pretty terrible. The AP dubbed the talk-athon a lot of hot air about a lot of hot air and said the speeches were little more than theatrics.

Maybe, as some speculate, Senate Democrats were just trying to please the left-coast billionaire who plans to finance so many of their campaigns.

The talking Senators didn’t really introduce any new legislation. I didn’t hear the talking Senators announce votes on bills already pending before the Senate. They basically just talked and talked and tossed out political attacks at a party that doesn’t even control the Democratic-run Senate.

No wonder the American people have such a low opinion of Congress.

The so-called talk-athon perfectly illustrated something else too—the emptiness of today’s Washington Democratic majority.

I remember a time when Democrats could say with some legitimacy that they were the party for working people. Those days seem to be receding further and further into the rearview mirror. Because whether it is addressing the opportunity gap in the ObamaCare economy or building the Keystone Pipeline or last night’s whatever that was, Washington Democrats keep opting for the empty political stunt over the reasonable, substantive solutions for the middle class.

Here is the thing: We need two serious political parties in this country debating serious ideas. When we see Washington Democrats throwing seriousness out the window like this, it is bad for everybody. If Washington Democrats are actually serious about all of the talk last night, they should follow it with action. The Democrats control the Senate. Bring up, bring up the cap-and-tax bill and let’s have a debate, put it on the agenda, and let’s debate it.

As the AP noted, despite all of the bravado, Democratic leaders made it clear they have no plan to bring a Democratic climate bill to the floor this year. So what was all the talking about?

Our friends on the other side set up the agenda. Call up the bill. The reason they won’t isn’t because of obstructionism or whatever else they might want to claim. It is because too many Members of their own party would vote against it.

Remember, Washington Democrats couldn’t even pass that bill when they controlled the Senate with a filibuster-proof majority back in 2009 or 2010. More importantly, the American people don’t want a national energy tax that would make their utility bills even higher than they already are.

Look. Americans have widely differing opinions about how Washington should be approaching environmental policy. That much is very clear. But one thing we should all be able to agree upon is this: Imposing massive restrictions upon our own economy, devastating the lives of our own mining