

Committee on Appropriations, with my vice chairman Senator RICHARD SHELBY, Senator DAN COATS, and the Subcommittee on Homeland Security, Senator DAN COATS and Senator Mary Landrieu, we came up with a fiscal framework. So did the House. They came up with it. So the very money that we put into the CR and the clean bill that Senator SHAHEEN—now the ranking member—and I had, has the funding for Homeland Security that Homeland Security says it needs and we have arrived at on a bipartisan basis.

If in fact we are allowed to bring up a clean bill, we have agreed on the money. There is no dispute over the money. We have looked very carefully at it. We worked on a bipartisan basis. We worked on a bicameral basis. We are ready to go. What will slow us down is if we get into an intense debate on immigration and riders to try to stop the activities of President Obama.

I strongly recommend to my colleagues: Do not play politics with the security of the United States of America. We were all horror stricken at what happened in Paris. We are repulsed at what is going on with ISIL. We are very concerned about lone-wolf attacks. We worry—and the chair of the authorizing committee on Homeland Security in the House has said: They are coming here, they are coming here, they are on their way. We have got to be ready. Well, one of the ways we have got to be ready is to make sure the resources in Homeland Security are funded and that they are not worried about a shutdown, showdown, slamdown politics over a fight on immigration.

Should we have a discussion on immigration? You bet. Should we even have an outright robust debate on it? I am all for it. But leave Homeland Security alone. Pass the money bill. If you disagree with the money, argue over that. But if you want to fight over immigration policy, that is another debate for another day in another way.

The Nation faces growing threats where Americans are endangered at home and abroad. Terrorists are threatening us with bombs and guns, and lone wolves in Ottawa, organized radicals in Paris, cyber criminals with backing from nation states and organized crime.

In terms of the Secret Service, we have the need to reform the Secret Service. We have fence jumpers at the White House, drones landing on the White House lawn.

In the face of these threats, the Republican majority's response is to hold the funding of Homeland Security up to pick a fight with the President over immigration. Uncertainty undermines security. Let's give the Agency certainty of funding.

We are 4 months into the fiscal year. Another continuing funding resolution would be the fifth continuing resolution. That is no way to run an agency so big, so complicated.

Senator COATS and Senator Landrieu and our House colleagues worked so well to come up with the bill. They provide resources for DHS, with the total funding of \$39.7 billion, an increase of over \$400 million above the fiscal year 2014. We could pass that today. We could pass it on Monday, we could pass it on Tuesday.

All of my Democratic colleagues and I wrote a letter to Senator MCCONNELL asking him to schedule an immediate vote on a clean vote on Homeland Security. Well, let's see where we go on that.

What we have here, the clean bill offered by Senator SHAHEEN—now the ranking member on the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Appropriations—and I have a compromise funding bill that gives certainty to the people who work on the front lines to secure the Nation, whether it is securing the border, whether it is building capacity to meet agricultural and biological threats, whether it is replacing aging nuclear detection equipment, also helping our Coast Guard build their national security cutter so the Coast Guard can protect us against drug runners, pirates, terrorists.

More than any other specific increase, enacting a clean Homeland Security bill shows the Congress and the Nation value. We do value security, and we value the men and women who work every day to provide us with that security. Uncertainty jeopardizes security. We value them.

I urge my colleagues to put their money where their mouths are to enact a clean homeland security bill, and not to get into this whole debate with immigration.

I look forward—as we wrap up the debate on the Keystone Pipeline, we then take up Homeland Security and we take up a clean bill.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. BOOZMAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator withhold?

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I would say to the Senator from Arkansas, my time was delayed. I hope I have not slowed the Senator down this morning. I didn't realize you were here.

Mr. BOOZMAN. No, No. I thank the Senator. Everything is fine. We appreciate the Senator, as always.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

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#### HONORING LIEUTENANT COLONEL STEVE GRAY, RETIRED

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I wish to take a few moments to honor a true champion of veterans, retired Lt. Col. Steve Gray, who is set to retire from public service at the end of this month after nearly 16 years of helping his fellow veterans in Arkansas.

Since I came to Washington 13 years ago, Steve has served on my staff advocating for the needs of servicemembers and veterans across the Nation.

He has been a trusted aide whose reputation in Arkansas's veterans community is second to none. His passion and advocacy has resulted in better service offerings at veterans facilities across Arkansas. It is reflected in the lives that he has helped make better by solving an individual's problems at the VA.

If Steve was able to track down military medals a veteran earned but never received, those medals weren't just dropped in the mail. Steve would crisscross the State, personally delivering them, dressed in his Air Force blues, and present them with the stories of the veteran's time in service.

A veteran himself, Steve served honorably in the Air Force as a tactical air controller, with assignments as director of operations and commander in Virginia, Vietnam, California, Utah, Florida, Colorado, Kansas, and Iceland.

He also served as national director for the National Guard recruiting, retention, and advertising at the Pentagon. His final assignment before retiring with the rank of lieutenant colonel was in Germany where he served as an adviser to the commander and chief of the Air Force in Europe.

Along with the work he does in an official capacity, Steve is active in a number of veterans service organizations, including the American Legion and the Wounded Warrior Program.

He has served as vice president of the Arkansas Council of Military Officers Association of America.

I am excited for Steve as he embarks on the next chapter of his life, but we are losing a fantastic advocate for Arkansas veterans. However, I know that my staff will continue to provide the best possible service to Arkansas's veterans as we have the blueprint on how to do it right, thanks to Steve. He has literally set the gold standard on how to deliver for veterans.

I know also that in retirement Steve does not mean to fade from sight. Steve is not the slowing-down type of personality. Certainly he will take some time to travel with his wife Sharon in their retired life. But along with the relaxation, Steve has grand plans to travel the country singing at veterans retirement homes, and he intends to stay active with the Arkansas Veterans Coalition. This is his calling, his passion, and I am quite certain Steve will continue to work with the veterans community for years to come.

Thank you, Steve, for your service in uniform, your dedication to your fellow veterans, and most of all thank you for your friendship.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The senior Senator from South Dakota.

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#### HELPING THE MIDDLE CLASS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, last week President Obama came over to Congress to deliver his annual State of the Union Address. His speech focused heavily on something Republicans have