

Some of the President's overreach has been so out of bounds that the Supreme Court struck it down unanimously. Whether on the left, right, or center, every last Justice—even those appointed by the President—rebuked him for his overreach on recess appointments last June. Then just a couple of months ago the President rebuked himself by taking actions he had previously said many times that he lacked the legal authority to take. When he tried to suggest otherwise, a fact-checker blasted the spin and clarified that the President had been asked specifically about just the sorts of actions he was contemplating.

Last year President Obama declared that executive action was “not an option” because it would mean “ignoring the law.” “There is a path to get this done,” the President said, “and that is through Congress.” That was his view then. What changed? What changed?

The truth is, the latest power grab is not really about immigration reform. It is about making an already broken system even more broken. It is about imposing even more unfairness on immigrants who have already worked so hard and played by the rules. It is hard to understand why the President would want to impose additional unfairness on immigrants like these who just want to live their own American dream.

The question is, Do Democrats agree with the President? Well, we will soon find out. We will also find out if Democrats agree with President Obama who ignores the law when it suits him or if they agree with President Obama who made this statement just a few years ago in Miami. Here is what he said in Miami just a couple of years ago.

The President:

Democracy is hard, but it's right. [And] changing our laws means doing the hard work of changing minds and changing votes one by one.

That is the President a couple of years ago.

So I am calling on Democrats to vote with us now to fund the Department of Homeland Security. I am calling on Democrats to join us and stand up for core democratic principles such as the rule of law and separation of powers.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

LORETTA LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the record held by the Republicans dealing with Cabinet officers is not one they should be proud of. For example, during a time of the War on Terror, the Republicans held up the Defense Department's nominee for a historically long time. Never in the past had someone who was to be Defense Secretary been held up by being blocked from moving forward.

You would think that would be a lesson learned and that would be enough, but no, that is not enough. Loretta Lynch, for example, who was nominated by the President to be Attorney General, has been held up for longer

than any nominee for Attorney General in the last 30 or 40 years. It is hard to comprehend that. For example, Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM said she was “a solid choice.” Senator ORRIN HATCH has indicated that he supports her nomination. Why, then, do we have to keep waiting and waiting? We are approaching 3 months that this good woman has been held up from a job for which she has been nominated.

I would hope the Republican leadership would move this out of the Senate as quickly as possible.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Mr. President, I am not going to dwell very long on the matter that is before this body, and we will vote at 2:30. We have here with us the leading Democrat on the Appropriations Committee, and she will talk about homeland security. We have here on the floor today the assistant Democratic leader, who was one of the authors of a bill which we brought to the floor and which was debated for a long time and passed overwhelmingly before it was blocked by the Republicans.

We have before us a very interesting proposition. We have had terrorist attacks in Canada, in Australia, all over the European Union, including France and Belgium. Those countries, rather than talking about not funding homeland security, are talking about funding it with more money—but not the Senate led by the Republicans. They are doing everything within their power to make sure Homeland Security is held hostage to matters that do not really relate to homeland security.

If my Republican colleagues do not like something President Obama has done dealing with Presidential Executive orders—which, by the way, he has done less than any President in modern times—bring it up on the Senate floor and let's have a debate on that. Let's not do what happened previously and shut down the government. That is the direction we are headed. That is really too bad.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

Finally, Mr. President, the President has outlined a good proposal for a budget. It is nothing that is new. It is simply building upon the budget that was so successfully negotiated by Senator MURRAY and Congressman RYAN. That is what this budget he proposed is all about. It would seem to me, rather than the Republicans running out, as soon as he said a word, saying no, no, no, let's look at areas where we can compromise. Don't we need something done with the infrastructure of this country? The answer is obviously yes. Why can't we work something out in that regard? So I would hope that rather than saying no to everything the President does, that we should understand that our role, including Republican Senators, is to legislate. Legislation is the art of compromise.

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 1 hour, equally divided, with Senators permitted to speak therein, with the Democrats controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half.

The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask to speak in morning business as agreed upon.

WELCOMING BACK THE  
DEMOCRATIC LEADER

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, before the Democratic leader leaves, in the warmest and most enthusiastic way, I want to welcome him back. He looks like he has been in a big fight. I am sure he won. It is wonderful to have him back in his leadership role, here right at his duty station. We look forward to following him and to working with him to try to forge these bipartisan relationships.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND  
SECURITY FUNDING

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I come to the floor to call for a vote against the motion to proceed to H.R. 240, the House Homeland Security funding bill.

Now, this is a shock—for Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI to call for a vote against a motion to proceed on an appropriations bill. For the past 2 years, I have been on the floor speaking out, pounding the table, saying: Let's bring up bills; let's bring them up one at a time.

So now why am I on the floor asking for a vote against the motion to proceed on the Department of Homeland Security funding bill?

Well, I can tell us it is because the Homeland Security bill has two parts. One is an essential bill, the funding for the Department of Homeland Security—which I hope we get to and we get to as expeditiously as possible. But they have another component to it—poison pill riders—five riders from the House of Representatives designed to attack the President on immigration.

These riders, if passed, will guarantee the President will veto the bill, and we are going to be back to parliamentary ping-pong. We posture and pomp and vote. Send it to the President; he will veto it. We will get into more posturing, pomp, and partisan points. For what? We need to fund the Department of Homeland Security.

Yes, we do need to deal with immigration, but the Senate passed an immigration bill. Rather than attacking the President, let's attack the problems from immigration. Let's deal with the DREAMers. Let's deal with getting people into the sunshine.

This institution, both the House and the Senate under Republican control, criticized the President for not acting.