

reducing overall efficiency, wasting time and paper resources, and disallowing any new starts in procurement. Fortune 100 companies do not walk away from difficult budget choices by taking a pass to the next fiscal year. Neither does Main Street USA. Regardless of whether you subscribe to the belief that CRs save money, this is no way to run an organization. It is part of our obligation to the American people to ensure our scarce resources are given to projects that produce results.

I want to share a few examples of the true impact of continuing resolutions, taken from a memo prepared by the Congressional Research Service and hearings before the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Let's take the Department of Education. The Impact Aid Program is an elementary and secondary education program that does not receive forward funding or advance appropriations and, therefore, is more easily affected by an interim continuing resolution. Payments for children with disabilities are delayed when the Department of Education is operating under a continuing resolution.

USAID: The delay of funding of the President's Malaria Initiative, which was enacted in order to reduce deaths due to malaria by 50 percent, lasted until February 15, 2007, 5 months or 138 days into fiscal year 2007. Doing the math, this delay in funding relates to the loss of, say, 198,000 lives unnecessarily. In other words, by delaying it, the money was not there. We did not get the job done, and this resulted in the deaths of individuals.

NASA: On June 8, 2009, the Federal Times reported the following from NASA Administrator Michael Griffin:

Any time Congress passes a continuing resolution that holds agencies to their current spending levels at a time when the economy is experiencing inflation translates into a budget cut. And so we will be cutting the budget at NASA and the only question is how much. . . . And then the second question, after how much is decided, is will the continuing resolution be broadly applied and left to the discretion of agency heads to implement or will special programs be targeted to be either favored or disfavored.

FEMA: In fiscal year 2008, the Emergency Food and Shelter Program, which "provides emergency food and shelter to needy individuals," did not receive funds under the CR. Thus, the program did not have funds available for communities and their respective homeless provider agencies during what many view as critical winter months until February 26, 2008, or 149 days into fiscal year 2008.

The judiciary: The judiciary has had to resort to hiring freezes or furloughing employees under continuing resolutions. In fiscal year 2004, the judiciary reduced 1,350 positions, with probation and pretrial services receiving significant cuts.

HUD: During fiscal year—I am just giving you examples that have been

pointed out by CRS. During fiscal year 2004, the Department of Housing and Urban Development had to temporarily suspend the General Insurance and Special Risk Insurance Fund of the Federal Housing Administration because the continuing resolution did not provide a sufficient credit subsidy to continue with the programs. During the suspension, HUD was unable to meet the needs of the borrowers who would ordinarily be served by the respective programs, which created uncertainty among the lenders and potential borrowers. Mr. President, I think most of us have seen what happens when we have uncertainty in our mortgage system.

The Treasury Department: Continuing resolutions in fiscal year 2007 and fiscal year 2008 limited and delayed the IRS's ability to implement improvements in the taxpayer service. Also, these continuing resolutions prevented the agency from making job offers to highly qualified candidates until enactment of a full year's appropriation.

Just jerk them around.

Research and development: Most research and development programs continue to receive funding at the prior year's level when operating under a continuing resolution. However, this funding mechanism can only support existing R&D priorities rather than shifting to new ones because only existing programs retain funding. New and emerging technologies must be funded in real time.

The Social Security Administration: Operating under a continuing resolution for fiscal year 2010 will hamper efforts to reduce backlogs in the agency's disability program, which would result in decreased efficiency. Also, in previous years continuing resolutions caused the agency to implement a hiring freeze that contributed to service delivery problems. While Commissioner Astrue has gone to great lengths to send additional resources, for example, to my home State, Ohio still has people waiting more than 500 days for a decision on their Social Security disability claim.

I was very critical of SSA. I started looking back on the continuing resolutions that were passed. It was a chaotic situation. They were not able to keep the people they had. They were not able to hire more people, and we have a 500-day wait now. I am sure the Presiding Officer gets the same complaints from his people that they cannot get their disability appeals heard.

DHS: In testimony before the House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Management, the Department of Homeland Security's Deputy Procurement Officer, Richard Gunderson, spoke to the impact continuing resolutions have on the key homeland security programs. Gunderson testified:

A CR would stop those programs in their tracks and we would not be able to grow the way that everybody is saying that we need to grow.

Mr. President, there are a lot more examples of what I am talking about. I think this has to be the year we do our job. The Senator from Nevada, our leader, and the Senator from Kentucky, our minority leader, have both publicly stated that we need to do our job on time. As I mentioned earlier, the need for it is more urgent than ever before.

If I were the President of the United States today, I would probably look at what the Congress is doing, and I think I would say: One of the greatest gifts you can give me, one of the greatest gifts you can give our country, is to do your work on time so we do not have this chaotic situation we have had for so many years.

None of our hands are clean. None of our hands are clean. I have been here when we have deliberately not passed appropriations with the idea that maybe our guy is going to get elected President or we are going to get the majority in the Senate or the Congress and so then we can tweak it the way we want to because a majority is no longer in the majority.

This game has been played for too long around here, and it is about time we recognized it and did something about it.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. SHAHEEN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak therein for 5 minutes each.

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

The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak in morning business for up to 15 minutes.

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Thank you, Madam President.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I have spoken many times on the floor of the Senate about the desperate need for reform of our broken health care system. Today the Congress stands at a moment of historic opportunity. The attention, hopes, and anxieties of the American people are focused on us like never before.

We have seen over the course of the last 60 years constant lament over the