

Isakson	McCaskill	Rubio
Johanns	McConnell	Sanders
Johnson (SD)	Menendez	Schumer
Johnson (WI)	Merkley	Sessions
Kerry	Mikulski	Shaheen
Kirk	Moran	Shelby
Klobuchar	Murkowski	Snowe
Kohl	Murray	Stabenow
Kyl	Nelson (NE)	Tester
Landrieu	Nelson (FL)	Thune
Lautenberg	Paul	Toomey
Leahy	Portman	Udall (CO)
Lee	Pryor	Vitter
Levin	Reed	Warner
Lieberman	Reid	Webb
Lugar	Risch	Whitehouse
Manchin	Roberts	Wicker
McCain	Rockefeller	Wyden

NOT VOTING—4

Boxer	Inhofe
Hutchison	Udall (NM)

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table. The President shall be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate shall resume legislative session.

The majority leader.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. REID. There will be no further rollcall votes this week. We will have some votes Monday night. Everyone should be aware of that.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

IN MEMORY OF KATE PUZEY

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, I rise to acknowledge the second anniversary of a tragic event that happened on March 11, 2009, in the nation of Benin in Africa. On that tragic day, a young lady by the name of Kate Puzey was tragically murdered in her sleep in her house at night.

Kate Puzey was a Peace Corps volunteer from Georgia, who went to Benin with all the dreams, hopes and aspirations of the program John F. Kennedy created over a half century ago. She had served there for months. She was teaching young African children. She was sharing wisdom. She was sharing knowledge. She was sharing her love of mankind. She was representing the

United States in the way the Peace Corps intended it.

Unfortunately, her life was lost. I did not know Kate Puzey before her death. I only know her after her death. But I know her through her parents, through her schoolmates, and through her fellow Peace Corps volunteers in Africa who told me the story of Kate Puzey, and also, tragically, stories of other Peace Corps volunteers who have lost their lives or have sacrificed in the service of our country.

Tomorrow night, at 6:30, on the steps of the Capitol, there will be a candlelight vigil, acknowledging the second year anniversary of the death of Kate Puzey. Kate's mother will be here, as well as Peace Corps volunteers, as well as people from the Peace Corps organization. It will be a solemn moment, but it will also be a very sacred moment.

As the ranking member of the Africa Subcommittee, I have traveled to Africa on a number of occasions, and I have been in a number of African countries. On each visit, I arrange either a breakfast or a lunch, where I host the Peace Corps volunteers from the United States in that country.

Without exception, and in every case, these are the finest of Americans.

Just 2 years ago, when I was in Tanzania, I met a couple—73 and 72 years old—who in their retirement decided they wanted to give back and help their country and serve their mankind. They volunteered to go to Tanzania and build a library where there was not even a library, a book or a school, and they built it.

In Kenya, I visited with young people who went to Kenya to help carry the message of democracy, to help share, in the terrible slum of Kibera, the promise and hope of education, of good nutrition, of knowledge, of hard work, and of democracy.

We as a country are blessed to have men and women who serve us in many capacities—those who may serve in the House or the Senate, those who serve in the branches of the military overseas in harm's way—but equal to their service is the service of our Peace Corps volunteers. Kate Puzey is an example of what those Peace Corps volunteers do—at its height.

When I attended her funeral, I sat and listened, for over 2 hours, to her fellow volunteers, her former classmates tell about the Kate Puzey they knew: the academic genius, the committed volunteer, the person who loved life and loved people and wanted to share that love wherever she could.

The volunteers in Benin told of her countless sacrifices to help young people and children in their troubled land, in their difficult country, to understand better their life's future and to not look to poverty as a lifetime of shackles but to look to opportunity as a lifetime of hope.

Tomorrow night, when the vigil takes place on the steps of the Capitol, I will not be here, unfortunately, but I will be saying a special prayer for the

life of Kate Puzey, for her family, and for what she and all volunteers who have sacrificed in the Peace Corps have done for the United States of America, and, better than that, for mankind.

We have many great people to be thankful for in this world, but tomorrow, at 6:30 p.m., on the steps of the Capitol, there will be a pause to recognize the life, the legacy, and the sacrifice of Kate Puzey and I will be there in spirit and I will be with her in prayer.

I yield back and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RESTORING DISCIPLINE TO THE BUDGET PROCESS

Mr. INOUE. Madam President, today our Nation faces a very difficult political landscape when it comes to addressing the major challenges to our country, such as unemployment and the deficit. The American public is demanding that the House and Senate work with the President to address these concerns.

I believe the American people's understandable and growing concern over the national debt is shared by every Member of this body. But in order for the Congress to address our fiscal crisis, we must fix our broken budget process.

Today, with fiscal year 2011 nearly halfway over, as a result of the Congress's inability to finish its work, the Federal Government is still operating on stopgap funding designed to avert a government shutdown.

This is no way to govern. Continuing resolutions make it difficult for Federal agencies to perform their duties. As the Secretary of Defense, Mr. Gates, has stated very clearly, operating under a CR places a great burden on the Department of Defense. The same can be said for every Federal agency. Our failure to act responsibly makes the everyday functioning of government more difficult and less responsive to the needs of the American people.

Moreover, continuing resolutions make a mockery of our constitutional responsibility to allocate taxpayer funding wisely. Putting the country on budgetary autopilot is simply unacceptable. It is well past the time to cast aside the blistering campaign rhetoric of the fall and find the means to compromise.

Many new Members of this body were elected on the promise of a return to fiscal responsibility. I would suggest that returning to regular order in our budget process is a necessary component to achieve this goal.

The Appropriations Committee produces 12 individual bipartisan spending

bills, but when the Congress fails to act on them through regular order, we wind up with a \$1 trillion omnibus bill or a \$1 trillion continuing resolution that cedes the power of the purse to the executive branch.

Neither the most liberal nor the most conservative Member of this body should prefer an omnibus or a CR over the regular order in our budget process.

Several weeks ago, I had the opportunity to sit down with the new chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, Congressman Hal Rogers of Kentucky, to congratulate him on his new position.

During our discussion, we both agreed that the Congress needs to reestablish regular order in the appropriations process. Both Chambers need to pass its bills and allow us to work out our differences in conference.

I believe if we adopt this approach, we can do our part to help this Nation regain its economic health.

The first step in the process is the adoption of a budget to provide the framework for appropriations bills. The House must step up to the plate with a budget that is workable. It cannot hide behind vague rhetoric and arbitrary spending caps, and it should not insist upon irrational, problematic cuts that would devastate the lives of the American people. Likewise, it is imperative that the Senate do its part in moving a budget through a responsible and regular order process, including the timely adoption of a budget resolution. If a budget resolution is not adopted by early May, the appropriations process will be delayed. Every week of delay further diminishes our ability to finish our work prior to the end of the fiscal year.

In recent years, all too often appropriations bills have been held hostage, as Members offered message amendments, knowing they would not pass, while the time needed to complete 12 freestanding bills slipped away. By September, we had abandoned any hope of finishing all 12 bills as the calendar simply did not give us enough time.

We Democrats must recognize that regular order cannot exist without bipartisan cooperation. Last year, despite the lack of a budget resolution, the committee completed almost all of its work, preparing 11 of the 12 appropriations bills for full consideration in a timely manner. However, gridlock on the Senate floor eliminated any further progress.

If a more open amendment process for relevant amendments will enable these bills to move forward, we should be open to such an approach even if that means taking some uncomfortable votes. This Chamber is split 53 to 47. Both sides need to give a little bit, and in so doing, it is my hope that we can get the bipartisan appropriations process back on track.

Certainly, no Member of this body wants to explain to his or her constituents why we have failed yet again to responsibly fund the government or

ceded our constitutional authority to the administration or even why we are unable to work together responsibly to avoid a disastrous government shutdown. We must find a way to accomplish the tasks the Constitution has assigned to us. To do this, we need a budget resolution, we need the House to send over appropriations bills in a timely fashion, we need floor time, and we need a willingness to vote on amendments. Without these four things, there is no doubt in my mind that I will be standing in this Chamber in late September, yet again, seeking passage of a continuing resolution in order to avoid shutting down the government.

The House and the Senate need to find a way to work together to pass our bills under the regular order and send them to the President. This is the only way we can restore discipline to the budget process. It is the only way we can maintain our constitutional responsibility to determine how taxpayers dollars are spent. It is truly the only way we can avoid repeating the catchall spending bills none of us wants.

I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. KLOBUCHAR). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

REDUCING THE DEFICIT

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, yesterday the Senate rejected two bills to provide funding for the rest of this fiscal year. I voted against both bills, and I want to explain why and to explain what I believe is the only course open to us if we are to be serious about reducing the budget deficit.

It was a victory for the American people when the Senate voted overwhelmingly to reject the spending bill sent to us by the House. House Republicans who tell us they want to reduce the deficit have proposed a cure that does little to cure our budget disease and does great damage to the patient in the meantime.

The House bill proposed cuts in non-defense discretionary spending, and in that area alone. Simple math suggests that we cannot meaningfully reduce the deficit in this manner. These programs represent less than 15 percent of the total budget. Not surprisingly, then, the Republican proposal would reduce our projected budget deficit this year by only a token amount. As a matter of fact, it would reduce our budget deficit this year by less than 1 percent.

The Republican plan fails the test of seriousness about the deficit, but it would have done significant damage to

programs that Americans depend on. It would have cut more than \$1 billion from Head Start. It would have eliminated early childhood education programs for more than 200,000 American children. It would have cut or eliminated Pell grants for hundreds of thousands of college students. It would have cut \$61 million from the budget request for food inspections, despite the fact that thousands of Americans every year suffer from foodborne illnesses. It would have cut \$1 billion from the Women, Infants and Children Program, weakening a program that helps poor families put food on the table. It would cut \$180 million from the Securities and Exchange Commission budget and more than \$100 million from the Commodity Futures Trading Commission budget. And those are the regulators. Those are the cops we need on the beat to make sure we oversee the financial markets that recently devastated our economy.

It would have cut nearly \$290 million from the Veterans' Administration efforts to provide better service to our veterans.

The House budget would have cut \$1 billion of funding for community health centers, eliminating primary care for millions of Americans.

The proposal of the House of Representatives, which we soundly defeated here yesterday, would have cut \$550 million from National Science Foundation research, another \$1 billion plus from Department of Energy research, and almost \$900 billion from our support for renewable energy sources and energy conservation. All of that would make us even more dependent than we now are on foreign oil.

The Republican proposal from the House would have cut \$2 billion from clean water programs, putting public health at risk, and it would have cut \$250 million from the Great Lakes restoration efforts.

The House proposal would have cut more than \$120 million from the President's request and more than \$350 million from the fiscal 2010 level from border security efforts. That is the very issue—border security—which the Republicans, including the Speaker of the House, have called their No. 1 priority. Yet their budget would have cut more than \$350 million from the 2010 level for border security.

We need to make spending cuts, and I think all of us know that. We have to reduce and remove redundancy and inefficiency in the government, and it exists. The President has proposed cuts. We need to seek more cuts and we need to act. But the cuts the Republicans proposed aren't about increasing efficiency. Their proposal, as Senator MANCHIN pointed out yesterday, blindly hacks at the budget with no sense of our priorities or of our values as a country. So we wisely rejected that path.

We also rejected a second proposal, and I voted against that one as well. I rejected it because while it avoided the