IMPLEMENTING BUDGETARY SAVINGS AND EFFICIENCIES

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, during this time of budget constraints, sequestration, and continuing resolutions, it is crucial that every Federal department and agency identify maximum cost savings and improve efficiencies to minimize the impact of reductions on critical programs and personnel. It is also the responsibility of Congress to encourage departments and agencies to consistently identify and implement such savings and efficiencies.

We do not have the luxury of allowing the continuation of programs that are no longer relevant, are redundant with other Federal programs, can be done more cheaply, or that perpetuate past mistakes. Unfortunately it seems that the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development are not able to identify some potential savings. It takes outside watchdogs such as the inspectors general and the Government Accountability Office to review and independently evaluate department or agency programs and operations.

As chairman of the appropriations subcommittee that funds the State Department and USAID, I and ranking member LINDSEY GRAHAM have taken steps to avoid wasteful and unnecessary spending. We have reduced costs based on inspector general findings, directed the State Department to eliminate unnecessary overseas support staff and administrative expenses, and directed the Department and USAID to improve financial and contract management. We will continue to look for opportunities to reduce waste, terminate programs that are poorly designed or not meeting their goals, and save taxpayer dollars.

But this is not enough. The State Department, USAID, and other Federal agencies need to act proactively to identify efficiencies and reduce costs. Unfortunately, some of the inspector generals' findings are so obvious it is surprising, and troubling, that the State Department or USAID did not identify the savings on their own.

Here are just a few examples from fiscal year 2013 reports of the State Department and USAID inspectors general.

The State Department inspector general found that the Department has a team based in Frankfurt, Germany, that travels to posts in the former Yugoslavia and the countries of the former Soviet Union to train local staff and provide administrative support to posts. This might have made sense in the early 1990s, but it makes no sense 24 years after the fall of the Iron Curtain.

The inspector general determined that 80 percent of the Regional Information Management Center staff in Frankfurt does not need to be assigned overseas. Their work could be done in Washington, saving millions of dollars each year. According to the inspector general, an employee assigned overseas costs $232,000 more each year than an employee based in the United States.

In Iraq, at one of our most oversized and expensive Embassies, the inspector general found that the Department hired and paid for 513 Baghdad security personnel when only 253 were actually used. The Department also paid $20.6 million for an unnecessary airport security program that added 84 personnel.

The inspector general found that the Department had 955 expired grants with a total of $81.9 million in unspent funds. The inspector general also found that the Department had not closed out 1,421 expired grants each with a $0 balance, costing $97,069 each year in unnecessary administrative fees.

The USAID inspector general found that USAID added five overseas food storage warehouses but had not determined whether delivery times of food prepositioned overseas justifies the additional cost when compared with prepositioning food domestically. In fact, a cost-benefit analysis conducted in response to a 2007 Government Accountability Office recommendation found that food prepositioned overseas is seven times more costly than food prepositioned domestically and recommended that USAID consider increasing the amount of domestic prepositioned food. USAID has now agreed to compare the timeliness and cost of prepositioning food overseas versus domestically. We cannot afford to make decisions that expand programs or increase costs without some evidence that there is a benefit worth the additional expense.

The USAID inspector general found that in a 3-month period, September through November 2012, USAID paid $64,000 for more than 300 mobile devices that had not been used for at least 1 month during that time period and $48,000 for 267 devices that had not been used at all during those 3 months, and an average of 127 employees had excessive user charges of $118,000 which USAID could not verify had been reviewed and accepted. While these are relatively small amounts, they add up.

And the list goes on.

I know that the employees of the State Department and USAID are dedicated, hard-working people. Most Americans have little if any idea of what they do to protect the interests of the United States around the world. But it is because their work is so important that we cannot afford to waste the money they need to do their jobs. Top officials at the State Department and USAID must identify and eliminate outdated, redundant, and ineffective programs and unnecessary operating expenses. We cannot wait for the inspectors general to do their job for them.

CRIMINAL ANTITRUST ANTI-RETALIATION ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I am pleased that the Senate passed yesterday bipartisan legislation that will improve the enforcement of the antitrust laws. The bipartisan Criminal Antitrust Anti-Retaliation Act extends whistleblower protections to employees who report criminal violations of the antitrust laws. These kinds of violations, which include price fixing, have a particularly pernicious impact on consumers.

This legislation represents a continuation of my partnership with Senator GRASSLEY on whistleblower issues. Senator GRASSLEY has long been an advocate for protecting those who blow the whistle on wasteful or criminal conduct. Our bill is modeled on whistleblower protections that he and I authored as part of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act. The Criminal Antitrust Anti-Retaliation Act does not provide employees with an economic incentive to report violations. The legislation simply makes whole employees who have been fired or discriminated against for blowing the whistle on criminal conduct.

Whistleblower protection was recommended by the Government Accountability Office, GAO, in a 2011 report to Congress. The GAO surveyed an array of stakeholders and found widespread support for the kind of basic protections contained in this legislation. The bill allows employees who have reported a criminal violation to file an action with the Department of Labor if they have been fired or otherwise discriminated against for disclosing the violation. While the remedies provided by the bill are limited, they are crucial in protecting employees from retaliation.

The antitrust laws exist to promote a free and open marketplace and serve to protect consumers. These laws can only be effective if they are vigorously enforced. The Criminal Antitrust Anti-Retaliation Act will aid in enforcement efforts and ensure that consumers are protected from harmful activity. I urge the House to act quickly to pass this important bill.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF KRISTALLNACHT

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I rise today to remember those who perished and suffered during Kristallnacht, the Night of Broken Glass, 75 years ago on November 9 and 10 in Germany, German-occupied Austria, and German-occupied Czechoslovakia.

Earlier that year, in March 1938, Germany absorbed Austria—the so-called Anschluss. Then, at the September 1938 Munich conference, France, Britain, and Italy allowed Germany to annex the western rim of Czechoslovakia and to claim its 3 million Sudeten Germans as its own. In both acts, the concept of loyalty to the state was equated with ethnic identity.

Then, in October 1938, Germany expelled 17,000 Jews with Polish citizenship from Germany into Poland. These families were arrested at night, transported by train to the Polish border,