

we will see if Democrats are seriously prepared to filibuster this bill as well.

This bill would strengthen our national security. The bill would enhance our energy security. The bill would root out waste with smart targeted reductions so we can put that money to better use, funding more important infrastructure projects, more innovative energy research, and more critical safety improvements for our dams and waterways.

This bill is also critically important to our home States. Kentuckians would benefit from initiatives to protect the Ohio River shoreline, from cleanup work in Paducah, and from construction of the Olmstead Lock and Dam and other vital inland waterway projects.

Mr. President, this is a good bill. It deserves our support on the merits. It is good for our constituents and good for our country. That should be reason enough to support this funding bill. I would also remind my Democratic colleagues that 70 percent—70 percent—of the Democrats in committee did support the bill before us today.

SCHEDULE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, let me finally announce the schedule for today. At 12:45 p.m. there will be a cloture vote on the motion to proceed to the Energy and Water appropriations bill. That will be the last rollcall vote of the week.

RECOGNITION OF THE ASSISTANT MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, for the record, the Democratic leader, Senator REID, is attending a funeral this morning and I am standing in his stead.

First, I will address the comments from the majority leader, Senator McCONNELL. I have to disagree with his opening that Democrats are not interested in funding the government, that Democrats are not interested in funding the Department of Defense. I may remind my friend from Kentucky, the Senator who is the Republican leader, that it was the Republican side that initiated the government shutdown 2 years ago. For 16 days the government was shut down in a vain attempt to protest the Affordable Care Act. Now that threat is before us again.

It is unfortunate we are facing this, but I don't believe it is fair to blame our side of the aisle for delay. You see, Mr. President, as early as June, we started saying we are facing an October 1 deadline, and we need to have a budget compromise, a budget negotiation. Why? Because there is a fundamental disagreement about funding our gov-

ernment in this fiscal year that began October 1.

The Republicans have argued to use wartime funds—\$38 billion worth—to supplement the Department of Defense. The leaders at the Department of Defense say this is the wrong approach. They cannot build a strong national defense with an injection of wartime funds which may or may not exist at the end of the process—may or may not exist next year.

I might add, coincidentally, that the Republicans failed—failed—to put additional funds in for nondefense spending. Some of it is related to national security—the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and so many agencies that keep us safe here in the United States. The failure of the Republicans to provide funds for critical agencies that provide health and education services is the reason we have reached an impasse in the budget negotiations.

It is why 3 months ago we on the Democratic side said to the Republicans: You are in charge. You are in the majority. But if we are going to have a process that ultimately succeeds, you need to engage on a bipartisan basis in this negotiation. They refused. They refused and they came up with a short-term spending bill—we call it a continuing resolution or CR—which takes us to the first or second week of December. Beyond that there is no certainty about what is going to happen.

The Senator from Kentucky talks about the appropriations process, where so many Senators voted for a bill and now are against it. I have been on appropriations committees in the House and the Senate for a long time. In the Senate we have an upside-down approach, where you vote on the overall bill first, then vote on amendments. In each of the cases the Senator from Kentucky refers to, many of us may have voted for the overall bill, hoping that amendments would solve the budget problems I have described. When those amendments failed to solve those budget problems, we said: This ultimate bill is not going to work, and we know it. That is the reality of the process in the Committee on Appropriations.

So in June we invited the Republicans to meet with the President and Democratic leaders to work out a budget compromise. There is an indication that some conversation is underway, but not enough.

Why have we reached this impasse? Frankly, it is because the Republican leadership—certainly in the House—is in disarray. Today there is going to be an election in the House of Representatives for a new Speaker. A group of ultraconservative Republican House Members were successful in ousting JOHN BOEHNER from the Speakership. Now they are going to try to replace him but with conditions. One of those conditions is, as printed in the paper this morning, that the new House

Speaker has to pledge to the Freedom Caucus—the tea party Republicans—that he will never, never agree to any compromise that is a bipartisan bill coming out of the Senate.

Now, how is that for a standard when you are trying to govern in this country—when you have a President of one party and the Congress in control of the other party? The Freedom Caucus says: Don't negotiate; don't compromise. That is a recipe for a shutdown, a sequestration, and a continuing resolution. Let me tell you what that does. If we get into a continuing resolution for next year—this year we are in, I should say—it is going to mean dramatic cuts in many agencies.

Yesterday the National Institutes of Health were called by Senator BLUNT, who chairs the appropriations subcommittee for that agency. We sat before Dr. Collins and his leading researchers for the United States of America, and we asked them: What happens if our budget process breaks down, if we go into sequestration, which is an across-the-board cut, or we go into a continuing resolution, which is a continuation of this year's budget? What happens at the premier medical research facility in the world, the National Institutes of Health? Dr. Collins told us in very honest and somber tones: It would mean that we would suspend research in areas like precision medicine, destined I think to save lives across the world. We would suspend brain research in areas like Alzheimer's disease.

Once every 67 seconds in America—once every 67 seconds—an American is diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Last year, we spent \$226 billion as a Federal Government in Medicare and Medicaid on Alzheimer's care. We estimate about the same number, over \$200 billion, was spent by families trying to care for those afflicted by dementia and Alzheimer's. There is a suggestion now that because our failure on budget negotiations will lead to the suspension of research, we would destroy any hope of finding a cure for this dreaded disease and scores of other diseases. That is how serious this conversation is. It is unfortunate that it has reached this point.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, when I was young and going to grade school, we feared the bomb. We were in a cold war. We were given duck-and-cover drills to get under our desk just in case there might be a nuclear attack on the United States of America. That is imprinted in my mind to this day—the fear which we had about this threat to our safety.

I wish to read a commentary that is making the rounds with wide circulation by a mother who talks about a similar concern for her children. She writes:

Two weeks ago, my second and fourth grade daughters came home from school and