

need to work together, as the States of California, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, and even Wyoming, which is a long way away, have worked to solve the issues.

Today the Senate continues deliberation on the Energy and Water bill. Later this morning we will consider three amendments. One is a Reid-Heller amendment, which seeks to address drought conditions throughout the West. Our amendment would build on that spirit of collaboration by trying to address the fact that we need to stretch every drop of water as far as it will go.

This legislation isn't for any one city or region. It will help every State that relies upon the water in the Colorado River system: Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming.

I hope this amendment will be adopted. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. President, will the Chair announce the business of the day.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2028, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2028) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Alexander/Feinstein amendment No. 3801, in the nature of a substitute.

Alexander amendment No. 3804 (to amendment No. 3801), to modify provisions relating to Nuclear Regulatory Commission fees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 11 a.m. will be equally divided between the two managers or their designees.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ZIKA VIRUS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, by now we have all seen reports of the neuro-

logical damage that is done by the Zika virus. We have seen the damage it can do to newborn infants. It has been clinically linked to serious birth defects in pregnant women who contract it.

Since the start of the outbreak, nearly 900 Americans in 41 States, Washington, DC, and 3 U.S. territories—including over 80 pregnant women—have already contracted Zika. In my State of Illinois, 13 people have already tested positive, including at least two pregnant women.

But because we have the best scientists and researchers in the world at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, we know more today about the virus and prevention measures than we did when most of us first heard the word “Zika” a few months ago.

We know that mosquitoes spread the disease. We know that the arrival of warm weather signals the start of mosquito season, but America is currently unprepared to deal with an outbreak of this dangerous virus. We must improve vector control. We must expand access to family planning, education, and contraception. We must accelerate efforts to develop a vaccine as quickly as humanly possible.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention desperately needs funding to deal with this crisis, and they need it now before the summer months, when mosquitoes spread north across the United States.

Congress has failed to even consider President Obama's emergency Zika funding request. What on Earth is Congress waiting for?

Last week Senate Democrats sent a letter to Senate Republican leadership calling for immediate action to pass the Zika supplemental request. I hope this call for action will be heard by all of my Republican colleagues, but I especially hope that it resonates with my colleagues from the Southern States. These are the States that are the most likely to be hit first and hardest by the Zika mosquito virus: Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Alabama, Arkansas, and the list goes on.

In the absence of congressional action—immediate congressional action—the administration has been forced to divert funding and resources away from other important public health efforts in order to respond to Zika.

This morning's Washington Post headline in a few words tells the story: “Zika crisis costs states funds for emergency preparedness.” What does that mean? The President asked for this supplemental request weeks ago. The refusal of the Republican-led Congress to respond to the President's request for emergency public health funds to fight Zika means that we are cutting back on public health preparedness in States all across the Nation. Frankly, we are endangering people whom we represent because the Republican majority in Congress refuses to give the President his supplemental re-

quest to deal with the Zika virus. For instance, the administration just had to divert \$2 million in public health emergency preparedness grants away from Illinois in order to fight Zika in Southern States.

Well, let me tell you, I want to help people everywhere, including those in Southern States who are likely to be hit first, but not at the expense of the public health of the people I represent.

There is an answer. President Obama suggests it—an emergency public health supplemental for the Zika virus.

The Republican majority in Congress has refused to act. Both the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Chicago Department of Public Health received grants to prepare for and to respond to all kinds of public outbreaks, such as Ebola, Zika, and Elizabethkingia, which I will talk about in a moment. These cuts, which are being proposed in order to have the administration have enough resources to respond, are unacceptable and unexplainable.

They come at a time when Illinois, my State, is in the middle of the longest budget crisis in our State's history. This current Governor has been unable to reach an agreement on a budget for almost 11 months, making it difficult for Illinois families and State agencies in ordinary circumstances.

But because congressional Republican leaders have failed to pass a Zika emergency public health supplemental requested by President Obama, the administration has had to divert money away from States such as Illinois to respond to the threat of the Zika virus in other States. Is this any way to govern a great Nation?

Illinois should not have to lose precious funding to deal with public health threats because Republican congressional leaders—from Southern states, I might add—have refused to pass the necessary additional funding to deal with Zika, a virus that will likely impact their States first and hardest.

We have to do both. We should pass the Zika supplemental so Illinois and other States can keep the funding they need to deal with current public health threats and receive additional funding to deal with Zika.

Let me talk about why diverting \$2 million from my State of Illinois to Southern States for Zika is a challenge.

Last week the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention confirmed 10 cases of a bacterial infection known as Elizabethkingia. It has resulted in six deaths in my State. This bacterial outbreak is separate from an outbreak in Wisconsin that resulted in over 60 cases of this infection. So in the middle of this outbreak, Illinois is losing 8 percent in core funding for public health contingencies because of the failure of Republican leaders in Congress to pass President Obama's emergency public health supplemental appropriation.