

It was 18 months ago that we were first hit with the Ebola scare. It was a scare—and rightfully so. We were panicked about Ebola. Americans had been infected with this awful disease. But the only thing we could do was to do more to find out how we could stop it with a vaccine and with other treatments. It takes money to do that. But to take more than half a billion dollars of Ebola money and fight the spread of Zika is taking from Peter to pay Paul.

What choice did President Obama have? They were ignoring his pleas for help. Now that they can no longer ignore Zika, Republicans in Congress are reluctantly going through the motions of providing funding. As my friend the Republican leader said, we have taken care of Zika here on the floor—how wrong, how misleading. The Senate agreed to provide \$1.1 billion—about half of what President Obama requested. But everyone knows that is not going to do the trick because that money is not going to be coming until sometime this fall.

To make matters worse, the Senate-passed \$1.1 billion package would do nothing to pay back the Ebola money. It would pay back a tiny fraction of the \$510 million in Ebola funds that are so necessary to continue the work on Ebola. The Senate's \$1.1 billion is also wrapped up in the appropriations process.

Appropriations bills take months to get done. By the time it gets to the President's desk, it will be fall. We will know by then how much damage has been done because of the Republicans' inability and refusal to help us with that money. The American people should not have to wait that long. That is why Senate Democrats have repeatedly come to the floor and asked that we move to a Zika funding package as a stand-alone bill, separating from the very slow and tedious appropriations process. But each time, Republican leadership has objected. Senate Republicans don't want to expedite the issue. They would prefer that our response to Zika be wrapped up in a drawn-out appropriations process. Our Nation cannot afford the unnecessary delay.

House Republicans could not even pass a budget. Now we are depending on them to pass an appropriations bill before we do anything on Zika. They don't have a budget. These are the same House Republicans who last week passed legislation to give President Obama a third—\$622 million—of what the President asked. In fact, it is a little less than a third. Guess what. Guess where they are going to get that money. They are going to take it by raiding more Ebola money. Our Nation has spent the last 2 years fighting Ebola. But although we have been successful in responding to Ebola, it remains a threat. We do not have the ability to handle that disease.

Last week, the White House reported that CDC officials in West Africa are processing 10,000 new Ebola samples a month. We can't afford to drop our

guard on Ebola. That is what the Republicans are telling us to do. If we take these funds away from our Nation's response to the Ebola virus and we use them instead to underfund our response to Zika, we are ensuring that our defenses against both are inadequate. That is irresponsible and terribly dangerous.

I don't understand the Republicans' refusal to take Zika seriously. Why do they refuse to listen to the experts who tell us they need the full \$1.9 billion to be able to fight this devastating virus? It is as if the Republicans are betting that Zika will not be a disaster—like the horse race we had in Baltimore on Saturday. This is not a bet. It is as if they are betting against all the experts at the CDC and NIH who say the Zika virus is a real threat to Americans. They are saying it is a real threat to Americans because it is. Instead of gambling with the health and safety of millions of Americans, Republicans should give our Nation the money it needs to fight Zika, and they should do it now—not next month, not in the fall but now.

As the President said on Friday, we in Congress should not leave for the Memorial Day break without having taken care of this issue. He is so right. We have been on record for weeks saying the same thing. We don't need more time off. We already hold the record for working less time. This Senate is working less time than any Congress in the last six or seven decades. We don't need more time off. So next week, rather than taking some time off, let's get the legislation to the White House appropriating that money.

We have time to get out ahead of Zika, but we need to do it now. That window is rapidly closing by the day. Let's work together and do it now—Democrats and Republicans—to give our Nation the tools it needs to keep the American people safe from the virus. Right now, we are not safe.

TRIBUTE TO MARVIN SIMMS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I join my friend the Republican leader in congratulating Marvin Simms on his well-deserved retirement next week, after more than 30 years working in the Senate Recording Studio. He has been involved in so many of the things I have done in the last 30 years. We started here about the same time.

When Marvin began, it was then called the Senate television crew. It was a much smaller operation than it is now. As the Senate evolved in the age of 24-hour press and media—and so much going on with the Internet also—so did his job. Over his three decades in the Senate, Marvin gained more and more responsibility, culminating in his position today as the broadcast production director. Marvin has worked on many of my television interviews, and he did a superb job.

I wish Marvin and his family the best in his retirement. He is an avid friend

of NASA, our national agency that does so much in space and all things related to space. He is an avid fan. I hope he will use the extra time he has in retirement “to boldly go where no man has gone before.”

For all you who don't know what I am saying, if you know anything about Star Trek, you will realize this is a phrase from the show's opening sequence.

Marvin, go boldly where no man has gone before. Thank you very much for your good work.

The floor appears to be empty, Madam President. I ask the Chair to announce what the Senate is going to do the rest of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 4:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

LABOR DEPARTMENT PENSION RULE

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, 8 years ago reckless bankers on Wall Street sparked a financial meltdown. Their too-big-to-fail banks gambled with our economy, encouraging reckless mortgage lending by funding the slimy subprime lenders who peddled their miserable products to millions of American families. Those same banks then gobbled up those dangerous mortgages, repackaged them, and spread huge risks throughout the financial system.

The consequences were disastrous. Wall Street greed destroyed \$7 trillion in housing wealth and resulted in millions of Americans losing their homes. It killed 8.7 million American jobs. It gutted hundreds of pension funds, leaving millions of retirees hung out to dry.

Thanks to Washington bailouts, Wall Street is once again flying high. Corporate profits are up, and the stock market is soaring. But the real people who were hurt by the financial collapse—the millions of workers who lost their jobs, lost their homes, and lost their retirement savings because of