

what we did, and it would be open to the American people to see exactly what we were doing.

The reason we are talking about a continuing resolution this week and next is because of the filibuster of the appropriations process. It didn't have to be that way. In fact, we were on track to funding the government the way we were supposed to, bill by bill. In spite of the filibuster on the appropriations bill, we have been able to find consensus on a number of other important pieces of legislation. This is legislation that will help American families, strengthen our economy, and help keep the American people secure. Importantly, these were bills that furthered what I believe to be the appropriate philosophy of the government; that is, Washington does not always know best, and that power needs to be devolved from the Federal Government in Washington back down to the States and back down to individual citizens.

For example, we passed the first major education reform bill since No Child Left Behind, a piece of legislation called the Every Student Succeeds Act. This bill does exactly what I just described. Under the chairmanship and the leadership of Senator ALEXANDER and Ranking Member MURRAY, what this legislation did was it transferred more power with regard to public education, K-12, from Washington back to the States and back to parents and teachers—people who actually understand best what the educational needs of their students are and how to make sure they achieve their potential.

We also passed the first multiyear highway bill since 2005. Why is that important? Well, if you come from a fast-growing State like mine, a big State, the quality of highways and bridges are pretty darn important—not only important to public safety, they are important to the environment and they are important for the economy. But this is the first time we passed a multiyear highway bill since 2005. As I said, this legislation will help us maintain and build our infrastructure so we can keep up with economic and population growth and make the most of it. It will also provide certainty to our States and communities so they can actually plan for the future. As long as we were passing 6-month or yearlong Transportation bills, there was no way they could do long-term planning, which is more efficient and more cost-effective.

We also have done other important things. We passed trade promotion authority—working with the President—that defines the parameters of what Congress and the White House would agree to when it comes to trade agreements. I know “trade” has kind of become a little bit of a dirty word lately in Presidential politics, but I can tell you, in my State we see the benefits of our international trading ability every day. Six million jobs depend on binational trade with Mexico alone, and

NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, which basically tied together Canada, Mexico, and the United States, has been seen as a very positive move and has created a lot of jobs and economic growth.

We also reauthorized the Federal Aviation Administration—pretty darn important if you happen to fly.

We passed another piece of important legislation called the POLICE Act to support our local law enforcement officials and to make sure they get the training they need to respond to an active shooter situation—something that, sadly, more and more police find themselves confronted with these days.

We also had a tremendous vote—99 to 0—in the Senate on a bill called Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. I have said many times that sadly the profile of a victim of human trafficking is a girl between the ages of 12 and 14 years old, many of whom run away from home, only to find themselves living a life of literally modern-day slavery. This legislation was designed to make sure there were more resources available to help rescue those victims of human trafficking and to better equip law enforcement to track down their captors.

We also passed legislation that promotes a more transparent and open government and protects intellectual property rights, just to name a few.

Again, these may seem like small things in isolation, but they represent a major change in the way we do business here in the Senate—actually working together on a bipartisan basis to solve problems and to get legislation on the President's desk and have him sign it. Now, you won't read very much about that because the news covers conflict. That is just the nature of the beast. When we fight like cats and dogs, it is all over the newspapers and on the Internet and on TV, but when we actually appear to be doing the work the American people sent us here to do, frankly, it is not particularly newsworthy, sadly enough.

We have other important work that is still outstanding as the Senate continues to make progress on a conference report on the Energy Policy Modernization Act, a bill this Chamber passed months ago thanks to the leadership of Senator MURKOWSKI of Alaska and Ranking Member CANTWELL. We also are close to finishing up our work on the National Defense Authorization Act. This is the major defense authorization bill that has been passed out of the Senate every year for more years than we can remember. Then the work we have to complete this week and next is to find a way to keep the government up and running and provide resources to communities to fight the Zika virus and to prevent the horrific birth defects that unfortunately are part of that disease.

I point out these accomplishments in an effort to just remind our colleagues and anybody who happens to be listening that we do try—not all the time

but most of the time—to put politics aside, to focus on results, and to try to do things that benefit the American people.

I am thankful for the leadership of the majority leader. As I said earlier, leadership matters. Senator McCONNELL has worked hard to try to bring bills to the floor that did enjoy bipartisan support and, to the extent possible, to make sure everybody had a chance to participate in the process. It is that sort of vision and that sort of pragmatism which has brought us this record of success. I hope we continue to do that in the time we have left between now and the election and then when we return after the election to work together. I know it is tough work. It is frustrating. But it is worthwhile, and it is worth doing.

I don't see anybody ready to speak.

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

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in morning business, and the Senator is recognized for up to 10 minutes.

STOP TERRORIST OPERATIONAL RESOURCES AND MONEY ACT

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the issue of terrorism financing, especially with regard to the terrorist group ISIS, known by some as ISIL, or other terminology referring to ISIS itself.

Just days ago, we marked the 15th anniversary since the terrorist attack on our country on September 11, 2001. At the time, the United States had a fundamentally different understanding of terrorist groups, their ideologies, and their operations.

In the years since, our national security apparatus has grown and adapted, responding to evolving threats and prioritizing the fight against terrorism and violent extremism.

For example, prior to 9/11, the Department of the Treasury was not as significant in our fight against terrorism as it is today. An act of Congress established the Treasury Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence in 2004. Since then, this office has grown into an essential component of our counterterrorism work. They are charged with the task of cutting off the financial resources that terrorist groups need to survive.

The terrorist group ISIS presents challenges, a whole new set of challenges. Similar to Hezbollah, ISIS is part terrorist group, part army, and part criminal syndicate fueled by a

hateful ideology and controlling communities in Syria and Iraq. We know that ISIS has sacked banks and still profits from the illicit sale of oil, antiquities, and other items through the black market while extorting the civilians under their control. ISIS uses this funding to conduct terror attacks and control territory in both Syria and Iraq. They use it to buy more weapons, ammunition, and components for improvised explosive devices known as IEDs. They use it to pay salaries for fighters and develop propaganda materials to spread their hateful ideology.

In August of 2014, I joined with Senator RUBIO, urging the administration to prioritize stopping ISIS's financial support. Soon after, the President announced his comprehensive strategy to degrade and defeat ISIS.

Already, we have seen that the United States and coalition efforts, including airstrikes on oil trucks and cash storage sites, have had a meaningful impact on ISIS's finances. For example, in recent months, ISIS has had to reduce the salaries they pay their fighters. Our airstrikes have also taken key ISIS leaders, including their finance minister, off the battlefield.

Just yesterday, Deputy Secretary of State Tony Blinken reported significant progress on rolling back ISIS's control of territory. In April, Maj. Gen. Peter Gersten, Deputy Commander of the Combined Joint Task Force, Operation Inherent Resolve, said: "ISIS's ability to finance their war through oil refineries has been destroyed." That is what it says right here. Their "ability to finance their war through oil refineries has been destroyed." This is a very significant step, since ISIS was heavily reliant on this source of income.

The President also recently signed into law my bill, the Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act, which helped ensure that the United States is not a market for antiquities looted from Syria. This is important because a report by the CultureUnderThreat Task Force stated that ISIS may try to increase—its antiquities trafficking activity as other revenue streams, such as oil sales, are cut off.

ISIS is rewriting the rule book on how terrorist groups work. Despite the loss of territory in both Syria and Iraq, it continues to cultivate its affiliates in northern and western Africa, Central Asia, and other parts of the Middle East. It continues to sow the seeds of terror in neighboring countries such as Turkey, Saudi Arabia, further afield in Europe, Africa, and, of course, here in the United States. ISIS has figured out how to operate outside of the international financial system, lessening the impact of our banking sanctions that we have relied upon before. We may be able to defeat ISIS, but the problem of terrorist financing will stay with us.

I took a trip in February to Israel, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey,

which confirmed this assessment. That is why I believe we need a more robust, permanent, international architecture for countering terrorist financial networks.

In June, I introduced the Stop Terrorist Operational Resources and Money Act—the so-called STORM Act—with Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON, and this is but a first step. This bill provides a strong set of tools to compel greater cooperation from partner nations.

The STORM Act authorizes a new designation by the President called "Jurisdiction of Terrorism Financing Concern," which can be triggered either by a lack of political will by a country or a lack of capacity to take on this problem. Some countries have the capacity to make meaningful progress but lack the political will to do so. I believe we should levy tough penalties that make countries reconsider their willful ignorance or tacit acceptance of terrorist financiers carrying their country's passports or operating in their territory. The penalties under the STORM Act include suspension of security or development assistance, blocking of arms sales, and blocking loans from the IMF or the World Bank.

With some countries the challenge is a basic lack of capacity. The United States is well equipped to provide technical assistance and capacity building. We have done this before on the issue of nuclear nonproliferation. The STORM Act authorizes the administration to do the same with countering terrorism financing.

Lastly, the STORM Act authorizes sanctions against financial institutions that do business with ISIS. This sends a signal that banks need to be vigilant in ensuring that they do not facilitate ISIS's financial operations.

In the years since 9/11, terrorist groups have become ever more sophisticated in the way they finance their operations. We have to respond in kind, and it is right to expect all our partners to do the same.

The bipartisan STORM Act sends a very clear message. If you fail to pull your weight when it comes to terrorism financing and cutting it off, there will be consequences. If you want to improve your record, the United States is here to help you.

I urge my colleagues to support the STORM Act as an element of our fight against ISIS and a step toward building a more robust, international architecture to stop terrorism financing in the long run.

I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASIDY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ISIS

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, you oftentimes draw the short straw and have to preside while I am speaking, and you can probably give some of these talks as well as I can, but I am going to go back and talk about something I have discussed every couple of weeks—not so much during our 7-week recess but certainly before and subsequent to that as well. What I have been doing is providing an update for our colleagues on what is going on in a part of the world we have a lot of interest in, including Iraq, here; Kurdistan, here, which is part of Iraq; Turkey in the north; Syria, which is right here to the west of Iraq; and Iran is over here. We have the Mediterranean Sea right here.

I just want to hearken back to 2 years ago when the folks from ISIS were rolling through this part of the world hellbent on getting to Baghdad. Baghdad is right here, right down here, not too far from Iran. They had made extraordinary progress, killing a lot of people along the way, taking a lot of prisoners, a lot of them women as sex prisoners, and slaughtering a lot of people, with mass graves and a large amount of carnage. They were able to scare off the Iraqi Army. In many cases, the Iraqis turned tail and ran. Their leadership ran too. In fact, their leadership may have actually run before the rank-and-file troops, heading this way, back toward Baghdad. Finally, when the folks of ISIS were sort of knocking on the door just west of Baghdad, they were slowed and stopped.

What has happened in the last several months? There has been a big change in the momentum of the battle. Now it is not just Iraq on its own in this fight; Iraq is joined by a coalition of roughly 60 nations, of which the United States is the leader. Our job is not to provide boots on the ground in Iraq or in Syria; for the most part, our job is to provide intelligence support. Our job is to provide air support—fixed-wing, rotary-wing, unpiloted aircraft, drones—and our job is to provide training, support, and advice to the folks who are doing the fighting.

This is a province just west of Baghdad called Anbar Province. We have all heard of it. This area right here—west of this whole area is considered the Sunni Triangle because the lion's share of the folks who live in this part of Iraq are Sunni. There are particular cities they live in. One is called Fallujah. A member of my staff was wounded and almost killed in Fallujah a few years ago. There is Ramadi and a place called Tikrit. Tikrit, right up here, is where Saddam Hussein was from. All these areas were taken over by ISIS a couple of years ago. They have been driven out of those cities and out of this part of Iraq.

The folks who have been doing most of the fighting on the ground—their abbreviation is CTS, which, as I recall, stands for Counter Terrorism Service.