

in the Senate. As my colleague who worked so closely with me on this legislation, the Senator from New Jersey, has said, we are committed to bringing this bill to a vote this year and getting it done in a fashion that will show the bipartisanship that has operated throughout this year to bring us a 14-4 vote out of the Senate Judiciary Committee, to duplicate that wide margin on the floor of the Senate, to send a clear signal to people who use bankruptcy as financial planning that if you have the ability to pay, you are never going to get out of paying what you have the capability of paying. That is good for our country, it is good for the economy and, most important, it is good for the pocketbooks of honest Americans. Bankruptcies cost the average American family to the tune of \$400 a year. That's not fair to the American men and women working to pay taxes and make a better life to have to pay \$400 more per year because somebody else isn't paying their debts.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent morning business be closed.

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

MAKING CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2000

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative assistant read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 68) making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2000, and for other purposes.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, will the Presiding Officer explain what is before the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. House Joint Resolution 68 is before the Senate.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, as I understand it, that resolution is the continuing resolution that will keep the Government running for the next 3 weeks based on the 1999 spending figures; am I correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair will not interpret the content of the legislation. However, that is the topic of the resolution.

Does the Senator seek recognition?

Mrs. BOXER. I do. I yield myself such time as I may consume from the Democratic leader's time.

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

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I think we have reached a moment on the floor of the Senate that ought to be marked. Very sadly, it is a moment of failure for this Republican Congress, a mo-

ment of failure after promising a moment of success.

Why do I say that? There were three promises made by the Republican leader to the people of the United States of America. The first promise was that the spending bills, all 13 of them, would pass on time and within the context of the balanced budget; the second promise was that the Republicans would not touch the Social Security trust fund to pay for their programs; the third promise was that they would stay under the spending caps that were approved before.

In my opinion and in the opinion of many others, all three of those promises are being broken. In the lead story in the New York Times today, we read about the shenanigans going on in trying to get this budget accomplished.

I have proudly served on the Budget Committee in the Senate for 7 years; in the House, I served on the Budget Committee for a total of 6 years. I know there have been times when neither side has performed as it should. However, I never, ever remember it being this bad. I never, ever remember it being this chaotic. It is very sad because the rest of the country is doing great fiscally. This is the best economic recovery we have had. In my lifetime, these are the best statistics I can remember for low unemployment, low inflation, high home ownership. Things are going really well. Yet in that context, when things are going really well, we cannot get our act together around here. I have to say it is a failure of Republican leadership.

What is before us today is a bill that will continue the functions of Government for the next 3 weeks because, out of the 13 spending bills, only 1—only 1—has received a signature from this President. Therefore, we have to have a continuing resolution or the Government will shut down. I understand that. But let me simply say this. I think the reason my Republican friends are in so much trouble—and I hope some of them will come to the floor because this is their continuing resolution; I assume they are on their way so we can have a little bit of a debate here—I think the reason the Republicans are in so much trouble is, they have locked out the President, they have locked out the Democrats, and they are coming up with plans that are out of touch with reality and with what the American people want.

Let me give an example. Everyone around here says children are a priority and education is a priority. Yet the last bill my Senate friends have looked at in the Appropriations Committee, the one they saved until last, is education. HHS—Health and Human Services—includes education.

Why do I say the Republicans are out of step with the American people? I say it based on three simple facts.

There is nothing in that bill, not one penny, to continue to put teachers in

the schools and to lower class sizes—nothing, not a penny, not even to continue what we started last year when Senator MURRAY and the President of the United States of America put before us a very important program to place 100,000 teachers in the schools.

Last year, as a result of our getting together, we compromised at 30,000 teachers. To be exact, 29,000 teachers have been hired under this program. There is not one penny in this education bill to continue that program. We were hoping we would have funding to continue the 29,000 and go forward with the rest of the 100,000. We know that when there are smaller class sizes, kids do much better. We know that. It is a fact. It is indisputable. Yet in their Republican budget, not only do they not expand this program but they do not put one penny in to pay for the 29,000 teachers all over the country who are already in the classroom. This Republican budget is a pink slip for 29,000 teachers. How does that comport with what the American people want? How does that comport with the reality the American people expect from us? It does not.

Another thing the American people say they want from us is to rebuild our crumbling schools. You do not have to have a degree in education or sociology to understand our schools are falling down. What kind of message is it to our children when we say how important education is in this global marketplace and their parents are telling them how important it is, and they walk into school, and what happens? The ceiling tiles are falling down on their heads. I saw it in Sacramento, CA. I saw it in Los Angeles County. Yesterday, the President was in a Louisiana school. He saw the same thing. We need to make sure we rebuild our crumbling schools. That is another issue the American people want resolved.

Third, after school; I have brought the issue of after school to the Senate for many years. I am very pleased to say we are moving forward. But we have thousands and hundreds of thousands of children on waiting lists for afterschool programs.

Why are they important? Because we know in many cases parents work and kids get in trouble after school. We know when they have good afterschool programs, they learn, they get mentoring, the business community comes in, the police community comes in, they learn about the dangers of drugs, they can get help with their homework, and they do important things. I have been to some fantastic afterschool programs, and I have seen the look on the kids' faces. I tell you, they are doing well. Studies show they improve their academic performance—by 80 percent in one particular program in Sacramento—if they have afterschool.

What does the Republican education budget do for after school? It comes in