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## Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Savior, You have been with this Nation from its birth. Use our lawmakers to protect and preserve it against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

Give our Senators kind hearts and humble spirits; help them to aspire to become instruments of Your purposes. Lord, guide them to find in each problem and perplexity the prelude to greater understanding and usefulness. May they seek daily to maintain their ethical, moral, and spiritual fitness.

And, Lord, sustain those who are suffering most because of this partial government shutdown.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

DISAPPROVING THE PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL TO TAKE AN ACTION RELATING TO THE APPLICATION OF CERTAIN SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S.J. Res. 2, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 2) disapproving the President's proposal to take an action relating to the application of certain sanctions with respect to the Russian Federation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 12:30 p.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President I ask unanimous consent that the time on the quorum call be equally divided between the two sides.

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

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

#### BORDER SECURITY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, one dollar—one dollar—that is the amount that the Speaker of the House said she would be willing to invest in physical barriers at our southern border—one dollar. Talk about serious, good-faith negotiations. Talk about taking borders seriously.

The men and women on the ground have been unambiguous about the cri-

sis they are facing: the entry of criminal aliens and gang members into our country, the drugs that go on to infect our communities, the ongoing humanitarian crises that are fueled by our government's mixed signals and our inability to enforce our own laws.

According to Speaker PELOSI, these urgent issues are worth about 33 cents each—33 cents. As we all know, that is because the Speaker has recently defined a brandnew dogma for the Democratic Party: Actually enforcing our immigration laws with the help of physical barriers is “an immorality”—an immorality.

That is quite the indictment of her fellow Democrats' past positions. Recent years have seen Democrats vote for billions—billions—of dollars in physical walls and fencing. Recent years have seen a Democratic administration build the same steel barriers—the very same steel barriers—that this President now wants to expand.

But these days, it seems that Democrats are happy to take their cues from the gentlelady from San Francisco and her extreme, fringe position that walls have now become immoral. Really?

Yesterday, President Trump issued yet another bipartisan invitation for Members of Congress to meet at the White House and actually negotiate. Yet, again, only Republicans came to the table.

For the American people, who deserve both a functioning government as well as a secure border, that really is not a promising sign. For Federal workers who are now stretching every dollar until Democrats lose interest in dead-end political games, the Speaker's \$1 punchline is not very entertaining.

So for everyone's sake, I hope our Democratic colleagues will reverse course and work seriously with this White House to reach an agreement that can become law and fulfill our promises to our country.

In the meantime, as the White House made clear just yesterday, cherry-picking continuing resolutions that fail to

- This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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address the border crisis will not receive the President's signature. They are not going to.

The only way out of this impasse is a bipartisan agreement, and as the Democratic leader and I have both stated here on the floor, only an all-corners bipartisan agreement will receive a vote here in the Senate.

S.J. RES. 2

Mr. President, on another matter, before the Senate today is a resolution from the Democratic leader that would overrule career civil servants at the Treasury Department and fire from the hip on one of the top foreign policy concerns of the United States.

This is the pending business, despite the fact that the Democratic leader had previously proclaimed he would not let the Senate address any business—any—during this partial government shutdown. Apparently there is an exception to that.

Remember, that was the reason the Democratic leader gave for leading a Democratic filibuster of a bipartisan package that would have reaffirmed our commitment to defend our allies in Israel, stand alongside Jordan, and unlock justice for the victims of Assad's rogue regime.

On one day, they insist we shouldn't do any business; on another, it is time to bring up an unrelated resolution of their own. At the end of the last Congress, they said they would support bipartisan legislation to shore up our allies in the Middle East and deliver justice for victims of unspeakable violence in Syria. Now they are filibustering the bill and have voted against it three times—three times against this potential bill that benefits our allies Israel and Jordan and deals with the victims of cruelty in Syria.

These twists and turns are pretty hard to follow, confusing, until you remember the one key to our Democratic colleagues' thinking these days—political spite for the President comes first, ahead of everything else.

You see, the administration isn't opposed to these bipartisan, urgent bills to back Israel, Jordan, and the Syrian people. President Trump, we expect, would sign these bills. We might actually make a law, which is what people sent us here to do, presumably.

Naturally, the Democratic leader isn't interested. Democrats in Congress don't think working with the President to accomplish things suits their political brand these days.

The Democratic leader's new resolution, which he has been happy to prioritize ahead of Israel and the Syrian people, offers him a chance to make a political splash. It overrules the careful actions of career civil servants at Treasury and blows up a nuanced decision the current law actually requires. Current law actually requires what they do.

Supporting Israel? It is not too interesting to my friends across the aisle, but picking a political fight with the President, boy, they are up for that one every day.

This is the key to understanding this unusual moment. This is the central principle. Democrats have made a marketing decision to obstruct President Trump at all costs, even if it hurts substantive priorities they used to support. That is why we are in day 26 of this partial government shutdown, with Democrats refusing to even show up and negotiate on funds for border security, which they used to brag about supporting. That is why Senate Democrats have decided that aid for Israel and help for the people of Syria are not worthy of this body's time but are happy to spend more time trying to blow up a highly technical Treasury Department decision that current law actually requires.

Let me say that again. They are happy to spend floor time trying to blow up a highly technical Treasury Department decision that current law actually requires. Political obstruction is their top priority. Everything else follows from that.

#### NOMINATION OF WILLIAM BARR

Mr. President, on a final matter, even in the midst of this political climate, the President's nominee for Attorney General delivered an impressive performance during the first day of his hearings before the Judiciary Committee. Senators were reminded exactly why he won bipartisan admiration for this body in 1991 and was confirmed as President Bush 41's Attorney General with no opposition—none.

Now, as Mr. Barr himself acknowledged in his testimony yesterday, times have changed, but the core principles that our Nation's Attorney General must uphold haven't changed. As the nominee testified yesterday, "the American people have to know that there are places in the government where the rule of law—not politics—holds sway . . . the Department of Justice must be such a place."

Those are the words of the right man for this job. His testimony made clear what he sees as key priorities for the Department of Justice: building on past progress in preventing violent crime, enforcing and improving our Nation's immigration laws, and protecting the integrity of our electoral system.

He stated definitively where his loyalties lie: with "the rule of law, the Constitution, and the American people. That is how it should be. That is how it must be. And, if you confirm me, that is how it will be."

Experience, integrity, and total commitment—the President has made an outstanding choice. The Judiciary Committee continues its hearings today. I look forward to their continuing review of this nomination and, then, to its being reported here to the floor. The American people deserve the very best. That is just what Attorney General Bill Barr will be.

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

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

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

#### GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I just heard Leader McCONNELL, my good friend, rail on and on. First, he doesn't agree with NANCY PELOSI on the wall. That is a surprise. Second, he doesn't like the fact that we want to get a vote to open up the government before we move forward on S. 1. We know that. His arguments are getting kind of old and stale.

I will say to the leader, very simply—you may disagree with us: Open the government. Open the government. You can do it, Leader McCONNELL. All your blaming and flailing isn't going to open the government. We all know Donald Trump is the obstacle here. You know it. I know it. We all know it. The only way to help all the folks who need help is to open the government.

There are a good number of Republicans on your side who have advocated that already. To hold the government hostage, you are losing the argument. You are losing it with the public. An overwhelming majority of Americans think the government should not be shut down over a wall. Even a substantial number of people who support the wall say: Don't shut down the government to get the wall.

We have problems on the border. A lot of Americans don't think it is a crisis that demands hurting our economy and our government.

Leader McCONNELL, we know you disagree with Leader PELOSI and me on what should be border security. We know you think we should pass S. 1 before we open up the government. Leader, you—you—can open the government. That is what the American people want, and I dare say that is what most of your colleagues want, at least if they talk to you privately.

It seems that every day the Trump shutdown drags on, we read another story about a new way it is hurting our economy. Eight hundred thousand public servants have been without pay, including thousands of veterans who work for the Federal Government. Each one of those Americans has a different story about how the shutdown is hurting them and their families. As nine essential Cabinet Departments remain shuttered, we are learning that the effects of the shutdown are even more widespread and continue to worsen. Yesterday, President Trump's own White House Council of Economic Advisers doubled their projections of how much economic growth is being lost each week during the shutdown.

Let me repeat that. The Trump administration's own economic advisers have just said that the Trump shutdown will substantially hurt our economy—twice as much as they originally

predicted. Growth is down. Economic and consumer confidence is down. Billions of dollars have been pulled out of our economy. Some of the leading financial leaders in the country are now saying we might even go into contraction in the first part of this year if this shutdown continues.

Do you think, Leader MCCONNELL, that is benefiting Donald Trump? Do you think, Leader MCCONNELL, that is benefiting the Republican Party, who the Americans know own the shutdown? No. Let's open the government and then debate our differences on border security and whatever else.

Why is our country suffering self-inflicted damage? Because President Trump is using the American government as leverage in an attempt to extract taxpayer money for a border wall he promised Mexico would pay for.

He says: You know, I hear Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity: He promised this in the campaign.

No, he didn't. He promised a wall that Mexico would pay for. He never said once, that I can recall, in the campaign: But if Mexico doesn't pay for it, we will pay for it.

Of course people voted for it—or some, not that many. This is ridiculous. The President makes a campaign promise. He twists the campaign promise around and now shuts down the government so he can show he is keeping not the promise he made but a different one. It would sound ridiculous and absurd if it weren't the reality.

The fact of the matter is that eight Cabinet Departments not named Homeland Security have absolutely nothing—nothing—to do with our disagreements over border security. That is why Democrats have offered, and continue to offer, to reopen the government while we debate border security.

Again, three words for Leader MCCONNELL again: Open the government.

Three words to my Republican colleagues: Open the government.

Three words to President Trump: Open the government.

Then, we can have all the discussion and debating, as we are supposed to do, on these issues where we don't agree.

Democrats have made entirely reasonable proposals. We proposed to open the government by passing Republican spending bills from the last Congress so there would be no controversy. These are not bills the Democrats put together. These are bills the Republicans put together with some Democratic input. Leader MCCONNELL voted for every one of them—every one of them.

As for this idea that he will not move unless Trump agrees, that may have made sense in the first week or two. It makes no sense now because President Trump is adamant, all over the lot, and seems unwilling and unable to tie himself out of his own knots to get the government open. Someone should step in. On our side, we are willing to step in. Where is Leader MCCONNELL? Where are the Republicans?

The American people support passing our bills—bills that we have asked unanimous consent for by wide margins—two to one, including nearly 40 percent of Republicans. Forty percent of Republicans support passing our bills and then debating.

So, Mr. President, even your prized base—a good chunk of it, about a third—is turning away from you on this issue.

When will the President and my Republican colleagues wake up to the hardship being inflicted on so many people across the country? It is time that the Senate act on House-passed bills to open the government.

The President, we know, is inflexible. He is “proud,” as he said, to have shut down the government. He is, amazingly—never seen a President like this—impervious to the pain and suffering of Federal workers and the American people. He makes stuff up: Oh, the Federal workers want the wall. Who? Two people who are on FOX News all the time who are part of a Border Patrol union? That is it, not the average worker.

The President has refused all entreaties to open up the government by Democrats and Republicans, like my friend Senator GRAHAM—one of the President's biggest allies in this Chamber.

His deputies are hardly even empowered to negotiate with the Hill since President Trump retracts their offers almost as soon as they are made. Everyone—everyone—can see how fruitless it is to try and negotiate with this President at the moment.

My friend Leader MCCONNELL is the one who can break the impasse. He has declared before that “he is the guy who gets us out of shutdowns.” He was proud of that. I wish he were still proud of it.

I think we are all ready for that, Leader MCCONNELL, because so long as Leader MCCONNELL hides behind the President and the President's absurd and destructive shutdown strategy, the Senate will be unable to vote on broadly popular legislation to reopen the government.

The longer Leader MCCONNELL allows this to continue, the more he and Republican Senators will be tied to the President and the President's disgraceful tactic of government by extortion.

#### RUSSIA

Mr. President, last night, the Senate voted to proceed to the resolution to disapprove the Treasury Department's plans to relax sanctions on Russia, and 11 Republicans—I am proud of that, proud of them—joined with every Democrat to advance the resolution, which will face a cloture vote today. Two or three more Republican votes will ensure cloture is invoked and the passage of the resolution achieved. So I would like to make a direct appeal to my Republican friends who are wondering about this.

This resolution is about a very simple thing. Do you believe America

should take a tough line on Putin or do you think we should go easy on Putin and his cronies? From where I am standing, that is an easy choice.

The past half decade has seen Putin expand his malign activities around the world, from invading Ukraine and Georgia to annexing Crimea, to propping up the brutal Assad regime in Syria, to directing nerve agent attacks on foreign soil.

Russian intelligence has tried to destabilize Western democracies at every opportunity—France, England, many other European countries, and most obviously here in the United States. As proof positive, they go online, they try to sow dissension in America, this beautiful country.

As Leader MCCONNELL said yesterday—confusingly, before voting against the resolution—“We have long seen Vladimir Putin for the KGB thug that he is.” Those are strong words but accurate.

In the face of this global assault on Western democracies, of course we have seen that the Trump administration has been shamefully and suspiciously weak on President Putin. The President has avoided criticizing Putin at every turn. When asked about President Putin's brutal tactics against his opponents, President Trump demurs.

When this body, near unanimously, passed the Russian sanction legislation, President Trump contemplated vetoing it.

When President Putin told President Trump he didn't interfere in our 2016 elections, the President reportedly said: I believe you.

Last weekend, we learned that President Trump has expressed a desire to withdraw from NATO this summer—the past summer is when he expressed the desire. That is Putin's dream—Putin's dream. All the advice of our military and diplomatic leaders were against it. Somehow, the President wants to do it, and who benefits the most? Putin. Who loses the most? The West.

Now, with this proposed sanctions relief, we have another example of President Trump trying to lighten the burden on Putin's oligarchs. We should not allow it.

For a very long time, the Republican Party predicated its foreign policy on taking a tougher line against Russia and Putin. In so many campaigns for President, we Democrats were accused of not being tough enough on the Russians. I have always felt we have to be tough on the Russians, but it seems acquiescence to the President, a fear of breaking with the President, has held back too many of my Republican colleagues from supporting this resolution.

The resolution, just to repeat, is sort of—I know Treasury made an effort, although I don't have much faith in the strength. I think the Secretary of Treasury is an intelligent man, but he never stands up to Trump, and I don't have any faith in his strength in standing up this time. So if Trump wanted a

weakened resolution because maybe Putin or the Russians wanted it, that is what we have here.

Forty-five percent control is not—45 percent ownership, which is what this does, takes Deripaska out of this? Forget it. Then add to his 45 percent the 7 percent the in-laws own, that the large percentage that Russian banks—controlled by Putin—own, the control is just as tight as it was before. The people who were put in charge have close relationships with Russia. This is not a strong resolution. It is slightly less than a joke—slightly less than a joke.

So I hope some of our colleagues will come around. This is all about America, the West, the stability of our Nation, and if Putin thinks he can manipulate our country and manipulate the President and too many of my colleagues who have always been strong against Russia go along, what is he going to do next? What is he going to ask President Trump to do next, and what will President Trump do?

I yield the floor.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** The minority whip.

#### GOVERNMENT FUNDING

**MR. THUNE.** Mr. President, to quote the great Yogi Berra, “It’s déjà vu all over again.”

It is the 26th day of the shutdown, and for the 26th day in a row, Democrats are refusing to seriously engage with the President to get the government reopened. Democrats have spent a lot of time talking about their desire to get the hundreds of thousands of furloughed Federal workers back to work, but their actions contradict their words.

The only way for the government to reopen is for both sides to come to the table and compromise. The Democrats are absolutely refusing to consider any concession. Their position is, my way or the highway. Unfortunately, that is not the way things work in the real world. When you have two groups with diametrically opposed positions, both sides have to give a little if they are ever going to get anything done.

The White House has a strongly held position on this issue, but it has also made it clear that it is willing to be flexible and to negotiate with Democrats. The Democrats don’t share that willingness, and their refusal to negotiate is victimizing the very workers they claim they want to protect.

Senate Democrats’ latest attempt to distract from Democrats’ refusal to negotiate is to push for votes on House-passed legislation on reopening the government, but as Democrats know very well, these votes would be meaningless because this is not legislation the President is going to sign.

Indeed, before Christmas, the Democratic leader in the Senate stated: “The President must publicly support and say he will sign an agreement before it gets a vote in either Chamber”; that from the Democratic leader as recently as just a few weeks ago.

Well, there is no point in spending time taking up a bill that hasn’t re-

ceived agreement from all parties. We know that, and the Democrats know that as well, but apparently they are willing to flip-flop on this issue if they think it will suit their political purposes. Kind of like how they were for a border fence before they were against it. That is right.

In 2006, the Democratic leader and the ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee voted for legislation to authorize a border fence. They were joined in that vote by then-Senator Biden, then-Senator Clinton, and then-Senator Obama. In 2013, every Senate Democrat—every Senate Democrat—supported legislation requiring the completion of a 700-mile fence along our southern border. In 2009, the Democratic leader praised border fencing as a border security accomplishment.

So what has changed? The need to secure our borders hasn’t changed. The effectiveness of barriers hasn’t changed. That has been well documented.

The House majority leader, STENY HOYER, was asked about the Democrats’ flip-flop, whether there is any real difference between what they supported previously and what they are opposing now. Here is what he said: “I don’t have an answer that I think is a really good answer.”

Well, that is an honest reply. Democrats don’t have a good answer because there is no real difference between what they supported a few years ago and what they are opposing now. Democrats have flip-flopped on the issue because they are afraid to oppose the radical far-left wing of their party and because they are committed to obstructing this President no matter what.

If Democrats weren’t hurting anybody, their refusal to play ball wouldn’t be a problem, but every single day that they refuse to engage in serious negotiations is a day that families aren’t getting paid, national priorities aren’t getting funded, and important border security is being postponed.

That is where we are. I urge my colleagues to rethink their obstruction and to work with the President to get the government reopened and Federal workers back to work and funding for that critical and important priority of ensuring that we have a secure southern border.

#### MARCH FOR LIFE

Mr. President, this Friday, as they do every year, individuals from every corner of the United States will come to Washington, DC, to participate in the national March for Life.

As usual, South Dakotans will be among them. Tens of thousands of individuals will march from the National Mall to the Supreme Court to bear witness to a simple truth; that unborn babies are human beings and that they deserve to be protected.

It can be easy sometimes for human beings to turn their backs on injustice. Maybe because we don’t want to get involved, we are reluctant to speak out.

It is particularly easy to turn our backs in the case of abortion because the injustice of abortion is hidden. It happens out of the public view behind closed doors, but we must not forget that every day in the United States, unborn babies are being killed.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which compiles data on the number of U.S. abortions, reports that there were more than 638,000 legal abortions in 2015—638,000. That is roughly equivalent to three-quarters of the population of South Dakota. That is an incredible number of lives lost, an incredible amount of joy lost, an incredible amount of love lost, and it is all too easy to forget because we don’t see it happening. We can’t forget. We can’t forget injustice. We can’t let fear or discomfort stop us from speaking up for those who cannot speak for themselves.

Fortunately, there are tens of thousands of men and women and young people around this country who are committed to speaking up for the unborn and who travel to Washington, DC, every year to remind us of the truth about abortion, to remind us that abortion is the destruction of an innocent human life, that every abortion kills an innocent human being with her own DNA and her own, distinct identity.

I can think of few greater things than to defend the defenseless, to stand up for those who cannot stand up for themselves, and I am grateful for all those who will march through the streets of Washington, DC, on Friday to speak up for the innocent unborn. I thank them for reminding us of this great injustice, and I join them in praying that one day every child will be safe from abortion.

I yield the floor.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Senator from Utah.

**MR. LEE.** Mr. President, this coming Friday, tens of thousands of Americans will take to the snowy streets of Washington, DC, to exercise their fundamental rights on behalf of millions of others who cannot. They will come from every State in the Union, including the State of Utah, to march to the U.S. Supreme Court. Fittingly, they will be marching down Constitution Avenue in the name of justice and in defense of the innocent.

The March for Life is a spectacular tradition in American politics, a mass demonstration of joy. Despite its size and the diversity of its participants—sometimes north of 100,000 souls, born and unborn—the march is typically ignored by the mainstream media.

The marchers also know that the Supreme Court, rightly, is not supposed to be swayed by public opinion one way or another. Yet they march January after January after January, cheerfully, prayerfully, happily, peacefully, bundled up against the cold, with babies in their strollers, and wearing smiles on their faces.

I have been, and I can confirm that the March for Life is the happiest protest you can see because they march not principally in outrage over the lives lost to the scourge of abortion but in abiding hope for the lives yet to be saved.

The March for Life is often seen as the pro-life movement's response to the Supreme Court's 1973 decision in *Roe v. Wade*. In truth, it is a continuation of the march of human dignity and equality that has defined American history since we first declared "that all men are Created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life"—yes, life—"Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness."

Raised from the crib on the Declaration of Independence, Americans can sometimes take its lofty and inspiring words for granted, but these truths, however self-evident, remain as revolutionary today as they were when they were penned in 1776.

From the dawn of time, powerful men have dehumanized women, the poor, the sick, the disabled, the young and the old, those who thought differently, looked differently, loved differently, or worshipped differently.

Whether enforced by tribal taboos, corrupted science, or judicial fiat, these experiments in dehumanization are the darkest chapters in human history—including the original sin of our Republic, the monstrous evil of slavery.

The story of American history is the story of our Nation standing up to oppression, of our coming to the defense of the vulnerable in our laws and with our very lives. From Independence Hall to the Bill of Rights, from the abolition of slavery to universal suffrage, to the civil rights movement, to the triumph over nazism, fascism, and communism, the American people have fought through prejudice and pride to assert and to defend the equal dignity of every single member of the human family.

For all the powerful forces arrayed against it, the right to life remains a part of who we are—a common heritage and, I believe history will prove, a common destiny. That is precisely why the march grows every single year not only here in Washington but in solidarity marches in State capitals all around the country.

In Salt Lake City on Friday, Utah will host its annual March for Life at the Utah State Capitol building. The same group of people will also be organizing the annual diaper drive for the Pregnancy Resource Center, a non-profit organization that provides free healthcare services to pregnant mothers in need. They know that to love is to serve, and to be pro-life is to be pro every life and not just some lives. Our duty to justice and equality extends beyond the unborn child in the womb; it extends to her mother and to her father, to her siblings and her friends, her neighborhood, her church, and her school—to her whole life.

Abortion is evil, but so is indifference. Human dignity impels us to transcend both, not merely by changing laws but by changing hearts, starting, of course, with our own. It is not enough to restore a legal regime of life; we must also endeavor to forge a new culture of life that is broader and runs deeper than the law.

Those of us who call ourselves pro-life have a particular duty to exercise the very right we fight to win back for the unborn: the right to live, the right to grow, to strive every day to become more fully the person God made us to be. A culture of life can be built only one hopeful soul at a time, one by one. We have a long way to go, of course, but the work is well underway. To see what it looks like, stop by the march.

The struggle for life is just the latest battle in America's long, noble crusade for justice, for equality, for freedom and liberty, and, of course, for dignity. It is another fight worth having, another fight most worthy of our heritage, another fight worthy of our children. One day soon, we are going to win this fight. We are going to win this fight, too, just as we have won others. Until that day, America will continue to march.

I yield the floor.

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. LEAHY. 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. LEAHY. Mr. President—and I welcome the distinguished Presiding Officer, who has probably presided before, but this is the first time I have been on the floor and have seen him preside. I realize he cannot respond, but I welcome him to the Senate.

#### GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. President, for 26 days, President Trump has held funding for our Federal Government hostage, using it as leverage to force Congress to provide \$5.7 billion to build his ill-conceived, expensive, and unfortunately totally ineffective wall on the southern border. We knew this was coming because for months during the campaign, he riled up his base with chants of "Build the wall. Build the wall." He invented a crisis at the southern border and then told supporters that only he could solve it. He gave his word over and over again that Mexico would pay for the wall so American taxpayers would not have to.

That was over 2 years ago, and I think he is feeling the pressure now as he shutters himself in the White House. Having failed to convince both Republicans and Democrats in Congress that the campaign slogan was actually good policy and having failed, as we all knew, to get Mexico to pay for the wall, he turns to a negotiation tactic that he seems to have mastered—bul-

lying. He has shut down the government of the most powerful Nation in the world, making us a laughing stock around the rest of the world, and he says he will keep us shut down until he gets what he wants. It is the height of irresponsibility. It certainly destroys our effectiveness in other parts of the world.

He is the President of this country. We all—Democrats and Republicans—accept that he is the President. But that also means he is supposed to lead the Nation, not run it into the ground like so many of his businesses that had to declare bankruptcy. But he sits in the White House tweeting and watching television all day, ignoring the damaging effect his actions are having on millions of Americans of whatever political persuasion around the country.

The shutdown not only hurts our Federal workers, it is hurting America's economy. The President's own Chair of the White House Council of Economic Advisers estimates that gross domestic product will slow by .1 percent for every 2 weeks the government is shut down. Today, there are reports that this estimate is too low and that the impact could be .1 percent for every week the government is shut down.

Those are numbers, but let me tell you a story and give an example. Small businesses employ more than 59 million people in this country. Small businesses in this country are one of the main drivers of economic growth, but every day the government is closed is a day small businesses can't get Small Business Administration-backed loans to invest and grow their companies.

Last week, I heard from a woman who runs a small sign company in Essex Junction, VT. Essex Junction is in Chittenden County outside of Burlington, VT. It is a beautiful community. It survives by small businesses that expand. She is trying to grow her business, and she is trying to acquire another one, but the SBA backs the space she is trying to purchase, and so she can't bring the sale to finality during the shutdown. As a result, the seller is threatening to just move on. He can't get an answer from the SBA. And, of course, that would throw her expansion plans into jeopardy.

We have many excellent craft breweries in Vermont. They bring in a lot of revenue. They hire a lot of people. They are a key part of our tourism. I heard from one of the head brewers from one of these major craft breweries. He depends upon the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau to approve his license applications, formulas, and the labels he puts on his beer. He has been brewing the beer and it is ready to be labeled, but the office is closed due to the government shutdown. They are not processing applications. He wrote:

I am one of the millions of voters whose livelihood depends on the government operating. . . . Every day that passes without the

ATTB up and running is another potential day of lost sales.

Farmers across the country and in Vermont are also feeling the pain of the shutdown. Just a few weeks ago, we passed the bipartisan farm bill. I was one of the conferees on that bill. I praised Senator PAT ROBERTS, Republican from Kansas, and DEBBIE STABENOW, Democrat from Michigan. They put together this bipartisan bill, and the President took credit when he signed it.

Well, it is a 5-year farm bill, and now the President, right after signing the farm bill, has shut the U.S. Department of Agriculture field offices that help farmers implement the law. Farmers need information now as the new planting and growing season looms. How long will it affect operations heading into the planting year? Most of the staff are on furlough. If you are a farmer in the Midwest and you are preparing your crops, you can't say: Well, you know, we can wait a few months—maybe past the growing season—to find out what the rules are going to be, and then we will plant. The decisions have to be made now.

It also means that farmers can't apply for much needed loans. They need these loans because the drop in commodity prices brought on by the President's tariffs has hit many farmers hard. They need loans to help pay their bills. Many banks are not willing to lend on them, so they have to rely on the Department of Agriculture as a lender of last resort.

Guess what happens in these multiple whammies. Offices that issue these loans are closed due to the shutdown. They need the loans because of the President's tariffs and the President's shutdown, but these offices can't give them the loans.

For those farmers who have better credit, who can access other lending options, many of their loans are also delayed by the shutdown since the lenders are unable to confirm that the farmer has other outstanding loans from the USDA. They could just connect to the USDA office to ask, but it is closed.

Just this week at the Farm Bureau convention, the President loudly proclaimed that he is providing assistance to the Market Facilitation Program to have farmers mitigate the financial losses caused by the Trump tariffs. But as of December 28, there is no one left in the USDA accounting offices to process any new applications for these much-needed payments.

I recently heard from a dairy farmer in what we call the Northeast Kingdom in Vermont. She milks 80 cows, and she is proud of her operation, but she has been hit hard by the President's trade policies, which have led to retaliatory tariffs against U.S. dairy exports, and she is now behind in her electric bill. The electric company is threatening to turn off the power to her home, to her barn, to her milk parlor, to her milking machines. She received one install-

ment from the American Facilitation Program to help mitigate the effects of the Trump tariffs, but she hasn't received the second installment because of the Trump shutdown. The second installment is needed to help pay her bills.

She says that she will be in much better shape when the new Dairy Margin Coverage Program from the new farm bill is implemented. Again, I applaud Senator PAT ROBERTS and Senator DEBBIE STABENOW for ushering that through in an almost unanimous vote. Unfortunately, no work is being done to get the program up and running because of the government shutdown. She is frustrated. She is worried about her future. She is looking for help. She is an honest, hard-working person, and she is stymied. I don't blame her.

Implementation of the farm bill, which I spent more than a year working on—I was on the committee conference working hard to deliver for our Nation's farmers on a wide range of key priorities, especially our struggling dairy farmers. It is now on hold during the shutdown with nearly every USDA Agency furloughed. This is life in the age of the Trump shutdown.

The President says that shutting down the government, paralyzing our country, is necessary to address a growing crisis on our southern border. The only crisis we have in our country right now is the one caused by the Trump shutdown. The crisis we face is not at our southern border but at kitchen tables, on family farms, and in small businesses across the country as families hurt by the Trump shutdown try to figure out how to make ends meet.

The President talks of hordes of illegal immigrants rushing across our borders, but border apprehensions have dropped 75 percent since 2000, and the majority of people apprehended at borders today are families—women and children—fleeing violence in their own country. They deserve our compassion, not vitriol.

More people are in this country illegally as a result of visa overstays than from illegal border crossings. This wall does nothing to address that. To address our complex immigration issues, we need comprehensive legislation based on facts, not bumper sticker slogans.

We all support strong border security—every Democrat, every Republican does. By working on a bipartisan basis in the last fiscal year, Democrats and Republicans supported \$21.1 billion for border security and immigration enforcement. This followed a similar investment we made in fiscal year 2017.

As vice chairman of the Appropriations Committee, I know that we invested in our ports of entry, including the purchase of nonintrusive inspection equipment to detect illegal and illicit contraband. We invested in aircraft to monitor our sprawling border from above and quickly respond to emer-

gencies. We invested in video surveillance, radar systems to detect movement in remote locations. These are solutions that work. These are smart uses of taxpayer dollars. A 30-foot wall that Mexico will not pay for is not a good solution.

This shutdown is not about border security. If this were about border security, we would be done with it today. The Trump shutdown is the President trying to distract America from his failures as a leader and shore up the support of his base. It is shameful.

It is clear that President Trump will not do the right thing on his own, so it is time for Senate Republicans to step up. Just yesterday morning, Democrats asked unanimous consent to take up two bills that would get this government back open—a six-bill minibus that has bipartisan support, including four bills that passed the Republican-controlled Senate 92 to 6—virtually every Republican voted for it—and a continuing resolution for the Homeland Security Department through February 8. Even though virtually every Republican has voted for this, the Republican leader objected to going forward.

If they continue to object to opening the government, this shutdown is as much on them as it is on the President. We have bipartisan bills before us that could reopen the government. We could vote on them today, and they would pass with veto-proof margins.

Leader McCONNELL, bring up these bills. Let's vote to end this national nightmare.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MCSALLY). The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I come to the floor today with a number of my colleagues on the 26th day of this deeply damaging and completely unnecessary Trump shutdown. We are here today to lift up the voices and stories of the people who are being hurt by President Trump and his Senate Republican allies and to once again call on Republican leaders here in the Senate to finally allow a vote and work with us to end this manufactured crisis. While President Trump is very focused on his political game, actual people, their families, and their communities are paying the price.

People we represent—moms and dads, workers, small business owners, people who did not do anything wrong, who just want to work, do their job, serve their communities—all of them have been pulled into President Trump's chaos and dysfunction, and it needs to end.

I am very proud to kick off another effort here in the Senate by those who want to make sure that President Trump and Senate Republican leaders

don't forget whom this is about and understand who is being impacted by their refusal to act.

I want to start with a few from my home State of Washington, where there are nearly 13,000 workers who have been caught up in this Trump shutdown.

Lauren is a furloughed FAA employee who shared her story with me through my website. She told me she supports her family with one income, and now that paycheck has been frozen. She said she has been losing sleep trying to figure out how to cut her own expenses and pay her bills since the Federal Government isn't meeting its obligation to pay her.

I heard from Adam, also from my home State, who is buying his first home with his fiance. What should be a very exciting time is now filled with unnecessary stress because Federal loans through USDA and FHA are held up. As if closing a home isn't stressful enough, now they don't know when or even if a loan is going to come through. As Adam described to me, home buyers are now caught in the middle, and that is just wrong.

One Federal employee I met with while I was home last week is a scientist at one of the impacted Agencies, and he told me about the stress that he and his family have endured since the start of the shutdown, having to cover their childcare expenses and mortgage while he is not being paid—expenses that total up to \$1,700 each month. Right now, he said he is able to tap into his family emergency fund to make ends meet, but he doesn't think they can hang on much longer.

I am not the only one, by the way, who is hearing from people in Washington State about how President Trump's unnecessary shutdown is impacting their lives. These stories are everywhere.

Earlier this week, the wife of a furloughed TSA employee with a 6-year-old daughter told the Seattle Times about how the shutdown has thrown her family into an economic tailspin. Their family is currently living off of money she makes from babysitting and with the help from her retired father, who has taken now a minimum-wage job to help with the family's finances. She worries how they are ever going to make it if this shutdown continues.

This is a small number of the countless stories coming out of my State and from around the country about how President Trump's reckless government shutdown is hurting real people. They are people in every one of our States in the country. They are people on every side of the border debate. They are people who heard President Trump say he would be "proud" to shut down the government. They are people who simply do not understand why they are being asked to bear the burden, to pay the price because President Trump and Republican leaders here in the Senate have boxed themselves into a political corner.

They are people who are getting angrier and angrier, more and more desperate with every day that goes by, who are going to make their voices heard, and we are going to make their voices heard. We are fighting by their side to end this shutdown. I am going to keep making sure they have a voice in the Senate.

I am proud to be with a number of my Democratic colleagues today. We are going to lift up their stories until President Trump and Republicans here in the Senate agree to end this crisis they started.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Ms. HARRIS. We are now 26 days into the longest government shutdown in American history, and 800,000 workers—800,000 Americans—are going without pay. Half of them are working anyway.

Let's be very clear about how we got into this mess. The Senate unanimously passed a bill to open the government right before the holidays. The vote was 100 to 0. There was such jubilance on this floor that, literally, Members of the Senate were singing Christmas carols.

Yet 2 weeks ago, the House, doing its job, then passed a bill to reopen the government. They sent six bills over to the Senate. This body needs to hold a vote on that legislation and send it to the President and ask him to sign it.

The real obstacle to ending this shutdown is in the White House. The President is holding the American people hostage over his vanity project on the southern border and peddling his usual propaganda to distract from a crisis of his own making.

The President has said that "most of the workers not getting paid are Democrats," as if that is true or if that should matter. He has said that "many of the people that we're talking about . . . agree with what we're doing." It has been said that the workers have said to "stay out until you get the funding for the wall."

Well, that is contrary to what we have been hearing and what I have been hearing. Last week, for example, I heard from a woman by the name of Trisha. Trisha and her husband are both air traffic controllers with nearly 40 years of Federal service combined. Trisha's husband served in the Navy. He now has to work long hours of overtime to compensate for the workers who are absent because they have been furloughed, and he is not being paid.

Trisha's job was deemed non-essential, so she is also not being paid. Neither parent in this family is being paid. They have three young children, and this is on top of the fact that Trisha and her family have already endured hardship these past few months as victims of the Thomas fire.

As she wrote me:

On December 5th of last year, our home was completely destroyed in the Thomas fire and we have used every resource available to us to work towards rebuilding our home.

While their home is being rebuilt, Trisha's family moved into a rental home, and they are currently evacuated from that rental home due to the flood and mudslide risks that are currently an issue in California.

Trisha said:

We have small children that we are most concerned about (with the uncertainty of our careers as Federal employees and the incredibly long road ahead in rebuilding our home but most importantly our livelihood).

She writes:

We will continue to stand with our NATCA Brothers and Sisters in ensuring the safety of the National Airspace System, but without the support staff working, it is a daunting task.

Trisha's message is one of nearly 20,000 phone calls, emails, and letters my office has received since the shutdown started 26 days ago—all pleading with us to reopen the U.S. Government.

They are 2 of the 42,300 workers who are currently being furloughed in California. I don't know which of them are Democrats or Republicans, and it doesn't matter. What matters is the people who are being hurt and the critical government functions that are going undone. They are the TSA agents who protect our flights and the air traffic controllers who help to land our planes. They are park rangers and FBI agents and Coast Guard members. They inspect our food and provide loans to our farmers. They conduct lifesaving research. Right now, though, they are being told to pay their bills by babysitting or selling their belongings on craigslist.

These Americans need their government to do its job. They don't need a wall. They need paychecks. Congress is a coequal branch of government. We don't need a permission slip before we can vote on a bill.

On behalf of Trisha and hundreds of thousands of Americans like her, let's take up the legislation that we have already approved. Let's send it to the President, and let's end this pointless shutdown as soon as possible—right away, now.

I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I thank Senator MURRAY, Senator HARRIS, and my colleagues who are on the floor.

I point out that we are now on day 26 of this outrageous and dangerous partial shutdown that was totally avoidable. It has been caused by one person—President Trump—and is now being assisted by the Republican leadership in this body by its not allowing the U.S. Senate, which is a coequal branch of government, to take up legislation that would reopen government—legislation that has previously passed this body and would, clearly, pass on a vote if the majority leader would allow us to have that vote. We could then reopen the government.

The unanimous consent request that I offered yesterday with my colleague

from Maryland, Senator VAN HOLLEN, would allow the appropriations bills that have nothing to do with this current dispute with the President to be fully functional, and it would allow for a continuing resolution for the Department of Homeland Security. We could then work, as we should work, to deal with border security and immigration issues. Yet the majority leader objected to the Senate's taking up that legislation, and the shutdown continues.

There are 800,000-plus citizens who work for the Federal Government who are being denied the ability to either get paychecks for the work that they do or are being furloughed without pay. In each one of those cases, there is a hardship that is having an impact that goes well beyond just the 800,000.

There are businesses in Baltimore that are wondering whether they can keep their doors open because they depend on Federal workers to come in and use their services. Whether it is a laundry, a cleaner, a restaurant, or a supply store, they know their sales depend on people having checks to pay their bills. The Federal workforce does not. So it is affecting secondary employment. There have also been a lot of layoffs by those who depend on the contract services of the Federal Government.

There are many individual stories, and Senator VAN HOLLEN and I have traveled throughout our State and have met with government workers. We have heard the account of one person who was supposed to close on a new home, his first home. He is not going to be able to do that because he doesn't have a paycheck that shows the wages necessary in order to support the mortgage because his most recent paycheck is zero.

We have heard from a person in my office who is an air traffic controller. Her husband is also an air traffic controller. They are responsible for relatives who are dependent on them. One needs a medical procedure, but they are not going to be able to move forward with that medical procedure because they don't have the out-of-pocket costs that are going to be necessary to pay for that. The list goes on and on and on of hardship—of people wondering whether their credit scores are going to be affected, which could affect their employment because they are going to be late in paying their mortgage payments. That is assuming they get paychecks in the next couple of months because, then, their homes could well be foreclosed on.

I could put a face on each one of these 800,000, but let me just share an account by Lamar Cobb, who is a lead transportation security officer at BWI Marshall Airport. I was there earlier this week, meeting with the government workers who are keeping our airports and our air traffic safe. These are dedicated people who are working without pay. He came forward.

One of the reporters there asked: Can you give us an individual hardship that you have actually confronted?

He explained that he has a 10-year-old daughter whom he describes as his heart and pride and joy. He had to take her out of cheerleading because he could not pay for it while he works at BWI without receiving a paycheck. Then he said something that, I think, really hit us all. He said at the press conference: It may not seem like the end of the world, but to a 10-year-old, it is pretty close.

These are the circumstances in which we are putting our fellow citizens by saying: Work without pay or be furloughed without pay.

It makes no sense at all. We should never have had the shutdown. We could end it now by the Senate's carrying out its constitutional responsibility as a coequal branch of government. Let's vote on the legislation that can reopen government. Let's do what we are responsible to do—let's end this shutdown.

I yield the floor.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam President, I rise to address the Trump shutdown and the real consequences that have occurred since 800,000 Federal workers, including nearly 3,000 Wisconsinites, have been furloughed or forced to work without pay.

The President said this week that his administration is setting records. It is true that he now holds the record for the longest government shutdown in our Nation's history, but every day that it continues, the Trump shutdown is causing real pain for hard-working people in my State.

I recently read the heartbreaking story of Mallory Lorge. Mallory lives in River Falls, WI, and works for the Department of the Interior. On Friday, Mallory, along with thousands of other Federal workers, did not receive a paycheck. Mallory has type 1 diabetes. Without her paycheck, she can't afford her \$300 copay to get the insulin she needs to manage her diabetes and stay alive. Mallory said she is rationing the two vials of insulin she has left. Her blood sugar rose to a high level last week, but she said she felt forced to ignore it. Instead, she said, I just went to bed and hoped I would wake up.

Think about that for a minute. Because President Trump and the Republicans in Congress refuse to support bipartisan legislation to end this shutdown and reopen the government, Mallory can't afford to get the insulin she needs to live. The House has done its job in passing bipartisan legislation to end the shutdown. Now it is time for Senate Majority Leader McCANNELL to stop blocking a vote in the Senate so that we can fund the government.

We are 26 days into the Trump shutdown. It is not just hurting Federal workers and contractors. It is also hurting small businesses and entrepreneurs across the country. In Wis-

consin, we make things—cheese, brats, and, yes, beer. Milwaukee is often called Brew City, but thanks to the government shutdown, there are craft brewers across our State that can't make or sell new beer.

Russ Klisch is the President of Lakefront Brewery in Milwaukee. Lakefront has been making beer in Wisconsin for more than 30 years. The Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau approves licenses for new beers and new breweries as well as labels for beers that are sent out of State, but the Agency is not currently serving craft brewers due to the Trump shutdown.

Lakefront Brewery has plans to introduce a brand-new beer in mid-February, but those plans are now on hold. This government shutdown threatens to cut its beer sales and hurt its ability to grow its business and support the economy. Other breweries across Wisconsin are impacted as well.

Mosinee Brewing Company opened its doors just last November, but it can't get approval to start making and selling its new beer until the government reopens. New "Made in Wisconsin" beer is also on hold until we reopen the government.

President Trump and Majority Leader McCANNELL can and should end this shutdown today and ensure that Federal workers like Mallory can finally get paid and so that small business owners like Russ can keep growing their businesses.

We should vote in the Senate today on House-passed legislation, and the President should sign it so we can finally end this useless shutdown that is preventing our country from moving forward.

I yield the floor.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I join my colleagues this morning to share the stories of the people in New Hampshire who are currently enduring hardships because of this Trump shutdown—a shutdown that has been termed by a number of my colleagues as the longest government shutdown in U.S. history.

I have here a picture of Andre and his wife Maria and their three beautiful children, from Derry, NH. Andre is an air traffic controller who works at the Boston Terminal Radar Approach Control facility in Merrimack, NH. It is sounds like it would be in Boston, but it is not. It is in New Hampshire, where we have hundreds of air traffic controllers and FAA personnel.

Andre works at the center to keep the airways safe for passengers who are flying over the Granite State. He also represents and talks to a number of other air traffic controllers in the New England region to hear what they have to say.

With what he is hearing right now regarding the shutdown, Andre writes:

Air traffic controllers have remained on the job, dedicated to the safety of every flight, but we don't know when we will receive our next paycheck. My colleagues and

I have suffered the sudden loss of our income due to the government shutdown. It's going to be hard for me to meet all of my financial obligations.

What I am most impressed by with regard to the Federal workers with whom I have met is their dedication to their jobs. All of those air traffic controllers understand that the safety of the skies in the United States depends on them, and they are there. They are not getting paid. They are experiencing hardships like Andre is talking about, but they are there and are doing everything they can to make sure that the American public can fly safely.

In addition to Andre's story, I have heard from nearly 100 other air traffic controllers in New Hampshire who are all calling for an end to the shutdown—air traffic controllers who are protecting our safety and who are working without pay.

I want to read an excerpt from a letter that I received from Jamie in Auburn, NH, because I think it so exemplifies where we are and how the American people are feeling about this government shutdown.

Jamie writes:

Dear Senator Shaheen, there are many stories to be told regarding the effects of the government shutdown on Federal employees—the stress of financial uncertainty, the inability to take necessary time from work to care for our families, and the continued degradation of FAA resources. . . . These are but a few examples shared amongst us, but there is something that tears at the very fabric of who we are. We take deep pride in serving our country and providing the safest and most efficient air traffic control system in the world. We do so with an unwavering sense of duty and a deep understanding of the trust bestowed on us by the American people. To be used as pawns in a political chess match not only disrespects us as dedicated Federal employees, but it serves to weaken our democracy. A government that must hold hostage the livelihood of its citizens is the very definition of a failed democracy.

Sadly, that is what President Donald Trump is doing. He is holding hostage hundreds of thousands of Federal workers, and he is being enabled in this effort by the Republican leadership in this Senate who is unwilling to bring forward the bills that would open the government today. We could pass them today.

These are just two examples that I think articulate the very real impact this shutdown is having on many hard-working Americans and their families.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD these letters that I have received from air traffic controllers.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEAR SENATOR: I'm writing to you today because of the effects of the government shutdown on my profession and family. My coworkers and I have remained on the job dedicated to the safety of every flight despite the concern of when our next paycheck will come. The government shutdown has effected me professionally and personally.

My husband and I are both air traffic controllers and we have 6-month-old twins. We

go to work normally like any other day and we pay for childcare. It is going to be hard to meet all of my family's financial obligations without knowing when our next paychecks will be. My family has no income while the government remains shutdown.

The shutdown affects us all in many ways, but the other major way it is effecting me is professionally. This government shutdown is setting back air traffic control staffing numbers.

The FAA Academy is closed during the shutdown which is where all of our new trainees train initially.

There are controllers being forced to retire because of age, but with the shutdown new replacements cannot be trained. We are at a 30-year low in staffing and every day the FAA Academy is closed the more set back staffing becomes. New trainees that are unable to train due to the Academy closure may lead to fewer new hires for 2019. Many controllers are working 6-day work weeks and these new hires will help.

This career has been all I wanted to do since I was little. Like my coworkers I perform my duties professionally and to the highest safety standards despite not knowing when my next paycheck is. We will all continue to do so, but with financial concerns until the shutdown ends. Please End the government shutdown. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Kristen (Milford, NH).

DEAR SENATOR SHAHEEN: I write today to urge you to end the current partial government shutdown caused by a lapse in annual appropriations. As a federal air traffic controller and constituent, I want you to know how the shutdown is affecting me.

Since air traffic control specialists perform life and safety excepted activities as defined by the Antideficiency Act, controllers like me have remained on the job, dedicated to the safety of every flight, since the beginning of the partial shutdown on December 22nd. However, my family will be placed under significant financial stress if the shutdown lasts beyond the current pay period. We don't know when we will receive our next paycheck.

The Federal Aviation Administration has closed its training academy in Oklahoma City, where new controllers arrive to begin their careers, as I did ten years ago this week. Classes have been cancelled, which will invariably lead to fewer new hires in 2019. Stopping the hiring and training pipeline exacerbates the current controller staffing crisis. The number of fully certified air traffic controllers is now at a 30-year low.

Please do whatever you can to end the government shutdown without delay.

Sincerely,  
Aaron (Milford, NH).

DEAR SENATOR SHAHEEN: There are many stories to be told regarding the effects of the government shutdown on federal employees. The stress of financial uncertainty, the inability to take necessary time from work to care for our families, and the continued degradation of FAA resources. . . . These are but a few examples shared amongst us. But, this is something that tears at the very fabric of who we are. We take deep pride in serving our country, providing the safest and most efficient air traffic control system in the world. We do so with an unwavering sense of duty and a deep understanding of the trust bestowed upon us by the American people.

To be used as pawns in a political chess match not only disrespects us as dedicated federal employees but it serves to weaken our democracy. A government that must hold hostage the livelihood of its citizens is the very definition of a failed democracy.

The Congress, Senate, and The White House has once again tarnished what was once considered the beacon of democracy. . . . The image of the United States of America.

Yes, I and my family need this government open. I need to be paid for my continued dedication. . . for my work. . . But, the American people need the practice of government shutdowns to end. The way for political agendas to be advanced is through diplomatic compromise not party-lined standoffs.

Please free my family, my colleagues, and the American people from this governmental siege of our livelihoods and open our government. Restore the faith of the American people.

Sincerely,  
Jamie (Auburn, NH).

DEAR SENATOR SHAHEEN: I am writing to you today because of the partial government shutdown that is causing 800,000 federal employees to go without the certainty of their paychecks. This uncertainty is adding undue stress to ourselves and our jobs because of financial obligations.

As an air traffic controller and constituent, I want you to know how the partial government shutdown is affecting me. For the last TWO weeks, other controllers and I have remained on the job, dedicated to the safety of every flight. Even without knowing when we will get paid, or even if we will get paid.

As my husband and I do not know when or if I will receive my paycheck, we are having to stretch every last penny to meet all our financial obligations. If this shutdown continues for much longer, we do not know how or if some of our bills will be paid.

We ask you to end this shutdown immediately!

Sincerely,  
Caitlin (Amherst, NH).

DEAR SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN: As an air traffic controller and constituent, I want you to know how the partial government shutdown is affecting me. For the last two weeks, air traffic controllers have remained on the job, dedicated to the safety of every flight. Yet, we don't know when we will receive our next paycheck. My colleagues and I have suffered the sudden loss of our income due to the government shutdown. I am a college graduate and have numerous student loans to pay as well as trying to provide for my family.

Please, we as air traffic controllers beg, end the government shutdown.

Very Respectfully,  
Adam (Hudson, NH).

DEAR SENATOR SHAHEEN: As an air traffic controller and constituent, I want you to know how the partial government shutdown is affecting me. For the last couple weeks, air traffic controllers have remained on the job, dedicated to the safety of every flight. Yet, we don't know when our next paycheck will come. This has placed an immense amount of stress and financial burden on me and my family. We are having to make choices on whether or not to pay certain bills or buy groceries.

Please end the government shutdown immediately!

Sincerely,  
Joshua (New Boston, NH).

DEAR SENATOR SHAHEEN: I am writing to let you know that the government shutdown is negatively impacting me, my wife and family.

As the shutdown continues my wife and I are having to make some difficult financial decisions. We have two daughters, one just out of college and the other in her senior

year at UVM. Along with all of our regular monthly bills we have student loan payments and tuition due.

Not knowing when to expect our next paycheck is causing undue stress on me, my wife and family.

I would like to see you help end the shutdown as soon as possible!

Ronald (Brookline, NH).

**DEAR JEANNE SHAHEEN:** First, thank you for all that you do for our state and country. I am writing you today with regard to the government shutdown. As an air traffic control trainee, my job security is something I have to worry about until I certify. Unfortunately, the shutdown has me worrying about my income and financial obligations as well. Morale is notably down at work, and the staffing only gets worse as the more senior controllers approach retirement. Anything you can do to assist in the swift cease of this shutdown would be greatly appreciated by air traffic controllers nationwide. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Andre (Nashua, NH).

**DEAR JEANNE SHAHEEN:** I'm writing to you in regards to the government shutdown. If this shutdown continues it will put a huge financial burden on my family. At this time I am the sole provider for my household. My husband is a small business owner in New Hampshire and is currently not collecting income to keep his business going. We have two children. A two-year-old boy and a five-month-old daughter. Since there is currently no paid maternity leave I had to live off of my savings while out with my new born, which is why I have no money saved up to cover all of our expenses during this shutdown. Going into debt because I can't pay for the childcare I use (while still working) is not an option. Please find a way to stop this shut down.

Lanna (Nashua, NH).

**DEAR SENATOR SHAHEEN:** Please, put an end to the government shutdown. I soon will have used my entire savings to pay my current bills. I now, don't have the down payment for a house that I was ready to buy. I've had to pass up on a vacation this month, skiing in NH, in fear that I won't get paid.

Please Senator Shaheen, put an end to this government shut down. After 30 years of service in the USAF and FAA, this is a slap in the face.

James (Manchester, NH).

**THE HONORABLE JEANNE SHAHEEN:** Please end the shutdown!

I am a 30-year controller, and I don't think I will be employed at the end of January.

The financial impact of the shutdown is a burden that I should not have to deal with at this stage in my career.

Staffing is the worst it has ever been and a continued shutdown will have negative effects on the air traffic system for years!

Please work to end the shutdown!!!  
Maurice (Derry, NH).

**DEAR HONORABLE SHAHEEN:** I am writing to you today to inform you of the impact the partial government shutdown is having on me, as an air traffic controller, and my family. For the last two weeks, I have worked air traffic, not knowing when I'd be paid next. I am dedicated to the safety of every flight. This sudden loss of income as well as paid leave is impacting my life multiple ways. First, I missed paid time off that was prescheduled, around the holiday with my family. With one child, a patient at Mass General, and another at Boston Children's

Hospital, I have had to miss out on paid/earned sick leave for both their appointments. Lastly, as a support for the training department, I am seeing a direct impact on future controllers.

Please end the government shutdown immediately!

Sincerely,

Kristine (Nashua, NH).

**DEAR SENATOR SHAHEEN:** As an air traffic controller and constituent, I want you to know how the partial government shutdown has affected me. As an air traffic controller I work a job that is 24/7, 365 days a year.

We plan and bid our vacations 15 months in advance. However, because I am an excepted employee engaged in life-saving activities, my vacation time during Christmas and New Year's was canceled. I had to work over the holidays and missed this time spent with family. This combined with uncertainty of when my next paycheck will come is adding stress that is not needed.

**PLEASE END THE GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN IMMEDIATELY!**

Sincerely,

Seth (Hollis, NH).

**Mrs. SHAHEEN:** I know every Member of the Senate has heard from constituents who are facing significant hardships as a result of the shutdown. I know every Member wants this shutdown to end. Unfortunately, President Trump doesn't seem to want this shutdown to end.

The House has already passed appropriations bills that would reopen the government. This appropriations legislation is not partisan. In fact, they are bills that have already had bipartisan support in the Senate. So I urge President Trump, Majority Leader McConnell, and our Republican colleagues to take up these bills to reopen the government. I believe we should reopen the government. Let's do our jobs so the rest of America can do theirs.

I yield the floor.

**The PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Senator from Washington.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

**Mrs. MURRAY.** Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Democrats control the time until 12 noon, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 3 minutes each, and the Republicans control the time from 12 noon to 12:30 p.m.

**The PRESIDING OFFICER.** Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

**The PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Senator from New Jersey.

**Mr. MENENDEZ.** Madam President, I rise to give voice to the more than 5,000 Federal employees across New Jersey who aren't getting paid due to President Trump's pointless government shutdown. Make no mistake. This shutdown is the result of a Presidential temper tantrum.

Democrats have voted for border security funding, for new technology to scan vehicles for drugs, for more port-of-entry infrastructure personnel, and for new drones to detect unauthorized crossings. Yet President Trump is holding 800,000 Federal workers hostage all because he wants \$5.7 billion for a border wall that he promised Mexico would pay for.

We have long known that something is broken inside this President that makes him incapable of caring about anyone other than himself. Clearly, he does not see Federal workers as real people with real bills to pay—people like Emily Nering of Basking Ridge, NJ.

Emily has worked at the EPA's Edison field office for 8 years. She coordinates water quality research and is in the midst of a major survey of the New Jersey-New York Harbor, and she assisted in emergency efforts to deliver clean drinking water to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands after Hurricane Maria. She said:

I took an oath of office too. I want to get back to doing the important work that the EPA conducts and to continue to serve this great nation. I saved up to contribute to an IRA this year and to start saving for a down payment on a home, but those funds will now be used to help me pay rent and other bills, pushing my financial and life goals further out of reach. . . . I urge the President and Congress to put us back to work so we can continue to serve the American people!

In recent days, I have heard from Coast Guard members, TSA agents, IRS workers—patriots who have built their careers on serving their fellow Americans. Their work is important, and they deserve to be paid. If President Trump wants to discuss issues like border security and comprehensive immigration reform, then he should end the shutdown, reopen all of those elements of the government that have nothing to do with his desired border wall, release his hostages, and reopen the government, but if he continues to bury his head in the sand, then it is time for the Senate to act.

We could likely pass legislation to reopen the government with a veto-proof majority if only the majority leader would hold a vote. Let's do the right thing for Federal employees like Emily. Let's vote and end this shutdown now.

I yield the floor.

**The PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Senator from Nevada.

**Ms. CORTEZ MASTO.** Madam President, on Friday, the day that thousands of Federal workers in Nevada and across the country missed their first paycheck of the Trump shutdown, I was in Reno meeting with two dozen affected workers and families who work for our Federal Government. These hard-working Nevadans who serve the American people in the U.S. Coast Guard, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Forest Service, and government contractors told me about the struggles they are having, their fears, and the very human consequences of the President's decision to hold our government hostage.

These Nevadans shared how their finances and their whole lives have been thrown into chaos by this reckless shutdown. Person after person told me that without the promise of a paycheck, they are struggling to pay their

mortgage or rent, keep up with their other bills, and even put food on the table for their families. Some are even cashing out their savings while others consider taking out high-interest payday loans, risking their good credit just to stay afloat.

It is not just Federal workers who were suffering. Entire families have had the rug pulled out from under them because of this reckless shutdown.

While I was in Reno, I had the opportunity to meet Brianna. She talked to me about her family. She is a stay-at-home mom. She has two beautiful daughters—as you can see—and her husband works in the Coast Guard. He is a coastguardsman. Right now, he is reporting to work without pay for the duration of this shutdown.

Brianna told me that without their sole source of income, her family would struggle to make ends meet. She told me they are weighing the decision to pull her oldest daughter out of school and to move in with her parents until the shutdown is over. That is outrageous.

I can't tell you how many letters and emails I have also received in the office. This is one from a veteran in Reno. He said:

I applaud you for standing up to Trump and not wasting taxpayer money on a stupid wall that he promised Mexico would pay for. However, as a Federal employee who is also a disabled vet, I am asking that you support legislation to assure that we do not lose pay and benefits because of this shutdown. We are currently scheduled to receive our normal pay on December 31, but after that, we have no more checks coming until the shutdown is over. Despite what others on the Hill have said, many Federal employees depend on those checks and face real economic impacts when the government shuts down. We are tired of being demonized by the right as parasites and bureaucrats, and it is ridiculous that the President wants to freeze our pay and stop all of our pay raises. The Federal Government is the largest employer of veterans, and we continue supporting our country throughout our Federal service.

No family or individual in the United States of America should have their life upended like this. So we ask that the Federal Government reopen and that the majority leader bring the bill to the floor so we can open this government on behalf of Federal workers not only in Nevada but across the country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Thank you, Madam President.

I join my colleagues today in calling for a simple, commonsense solution to one of the most vexing, unnecessary, and avoidable crises in recent history.

The present paralysis of Agencies' essential governmental functions is intolerable and unacceptable. It is shameful and embarrassing to every Member of this body, but it should be most shameful and embarrassing to the Chief Executive of the United States, who is singularly responsible for it by insisting on a wall and agreement to it

as a condition for reopening the government.

President Trump is singlehandedly blocking progress toward providing the American people with the services and the essential public functions they need and deserve.

The impact is on the consumers of those functions. We are all consumers. We all fly and depend on the air traffic controllers and the TSA. We all eat food and depend on inspections by the FDA. We all consume drugs, and the approvals of essential pharmaceutical medicines are vital to all of us. We all need and deserve the protection provided by the U.S. Coast Guard, whose brave men and women are receiving no pay—none.

Many of those 800,000 workers going without pay are also working without pay. I have sponsored a measure that will enable them to avoid foreclosures and repossessions of their cars and other financial crises through measures similar to the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. I have sponsored and supported calls for providing them with unemployment compensation. The ones who work need the compensation and the benefits to put food on the table and make sure they stay in their homes.

These 800,000 workers are experiencing real pain. They are real people with real lives going through financial hardships.

On Monday, I met with many of them at Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks. I heard them share their personal stories about how the shutdown is causing them real harm. I also heard about their dedication to doing their job and how the air controllers and—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time is expired.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. The TSA are overtired and need that help.

I ask unanimous consent for 1 more minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I respect the rights of the Senator. We have a number of Senators and a limited amount of time. So if he could finish quickly, we would all appreciate it. Thank you.

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

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Let me just finish by citing Adrian Pellot, one of those workers whom I met on Monday. Adrian is a behavior detection officer. He has done it for more than a decade. He is one of those workers going without pay. I will just leave you with this thought. He told me:

We have no income right now. We're bleeding money. Just day-to-day things. Food. I still have to pay the bills.

So do all of those 800,000 workers.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, let me tell you about the impact the

Trump shutdown is having on one couple from my home State of Vermont.

Kelly and Ricky Klein own Groennfell Meadery in Colchester, VT. In fact, this is Kelly with her very pretty little daughter, Nora.

Groennfell Meadery is part of a growing industry in Vermont. We are a small State. We have the most craft breweries per capita in the Nation, and they create jobs. They support small businesses. They bring people to Vermont from all over the country. Business has been good. Kelly and Ricky have been planning an expansion. Recently, they were approved for a \$1.3 million Small Business Administration loan. They were going to buy three new stainless steel fermenter tanks. They were going to move to a bigger facility, double their production, hire additional people, and bought additional supplies in anticipation of it. What happened? Their loan from the SBA is now on hold because of the Trump shutdown. It is not clear if it will ever come through. So instead of expanding, they have to use their own money. They have to use their stockpiles of mead. They have to take out a loan to make payroll. They are really hurting, but they told me one thing, even in this difficult time.

Even in this difficult time, they said they were more concerned for people who have lost paychecks and lifesaving benefits and with others in their industry who have been harder hit. It is a sense of community and empathy. I wish President Trump had that same sense of empathy and caring that they do.

We have to end this shutdown. I call on the majority leader—the Republican leader—to bring up the bills, which we have already passed by an overwhelming majority, that would reopen this government. Democrats and Republicans have voted for them. All we need is for the Republican leader to bring them up.

Stop the shutdown. Let people go back to their businesses.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL. Madam President, I rise today to talk about a New Mexico family who is severely impacted by the shutdown, and I think there are probably hundreds of thousands of families like this across the country.

This is Leah Teresa Ornelas, her husband Ervie, and their sons Ian and Zachary. They are all from Carlsbad, NM. Zachary, their youngest—in the middle—had a brain tumor and has undergone two surgeries. Zachary is now disabled and requires constant care. Ervie, his stepfather, reduced his work as a daycare teacher by 75 percent to take care of Zachary. Leah is a public nurse, and her paycheck goes to their high insurance costs and medical bills. The family moved back in together to save on expenses. Their older son, Ian, is now the main provider for the family. Ian works for the Department of

the Interior, has been furloughed for 26 days, and has now missed a paycheck.

The Ornelas family is scared to death that Ian will miss another check and another check. They simply cannot make it without Ian being paid. The Ornelas family has made tremendous sacrifices as a family. They can make no more adjustments, as the President callously advised.

This Trump shutdown must end now. The President and Senate majority must do the right thing for the Ornelas family—and for hundreds of thousands of families across the Nation—and open our government now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, as my colleagues have said, it has now been 26 days since President Trump shut down the government and began holding Federal workers and their families hostage to force funding for an expensive, ineffective, and unpopular border wall.

That is 26 days of working without pay for hundreds of TSA and Customs and Border Patrol officers in my State of Michigan and across the country. That is 26 days of our Federal workers wondering how they will pay their mortgage and keep their lights on. That is 26 days of grocery stores, restaurants, and other local businesses watching their sales dry up.

This shutdown is also hard on Michigan farmers, including Jessica Youngblood, whom I want to take a moment to talk about.

She and her husband David, who is a veteran, are raising their three young children on their farm in Macomb County. Like many farmers, Jessica is also a small business owner; the Youngbloods are launching a winery. For 3 years, they have poured all of their time and they have poured all their money into their 25 acres of wine grapes. I have had the opportunity to walk with Jessica and her children through the rows of grapevines, and I have seen how hard they are working as a family every single day.

This year, they finally had grapes to harvest so that they could launch their small business. They planned to open their winery on their farm and start selling their wine on Memorial Day weekend. Unfortunately, the government shutdown threw a huge roadblock in front of this homegrown Michigan business.

The Tax and Trade Bureau at the Department of the Treasury approves their labels—when they are open. Jessica needs to bottle her wine in March, but that can't happen without labels being approved and printed. As Jessica said:

We are 100% dependent on the grapes we grow on our family vineyard. . . . We are farmers! We need the government to open so we can run our business.

It is time to end this shutdown. Let Jessica and her family benefit from all of their hard work. So I say: Leader

McCONNELL, open the government so that the Youngblood family can open their small business.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, approximately 635,000 veterans work for the Federal Government, and the hardships of the shutdown on these men and women are multifold.

First, furloughed veterans who are Federal workers are missing paychecks. They are having a hard time paying their mortgages and paying their bills overall. Veterans with VA-guaranteed home loans are at risk of being evicted by mortgage companies because they can't make their payments.

Second, veterans are not getting the benefits they have earned from several Federal Departments, other than the VA. For instance, Native American veterans, who already face unique challenges with healthcare, are unable to rely on the Indian Health Service to provide their healthcare because it is closed down. Homeless veterans rely on the Department of Housing and Urban Development's housing vouchers, which are not going out because of the shutdown.

That is not all. Other benefits and protections are at risk. The VA is currently implementing major reform bills like the Appeals and Modernization Act and the VA MISSION Act. To roll out these new initiatives, the Federal Register must publish new rules and regulations. Guess what. The Federal Register isn't operational because of the shutdown, so the implementation of these wide-sweeping, bipartisan VA reforms is shut down.

On top of this, we know that those stationed at the borders and at airports—many of whom are veterans—are among those hurting the most because of this President's shutdown.

There are many more veterans suffering. Colin, from Billings, wrote me and said: "I am a federal employee and a veteran, and this standoff is placing a great deal of stress on me and my family."

His wife is pregnant, he has a 2-year-old son, and he has no paycheck. He spent his career in public service. After he got out of the service, he could have made a lot more money in the private sector.

Unfortunately, because of the fact that the President and Leader McCONNELL will not bring the bills to the floor, we are in a shutdown. This is the human cost of the President's shutdown. These are men and women who have volunteered to serve our Nation and put themselves in harm's way and continue serving our Nation as civilians, and this is how the President says thank you—putting them out of a job, out of a paycheck, and out of the benefits that they have earned. He belittles the financial hardship that his actions are causing, and he turns their service in the military and as civilians into a political football.

The President has turned his back on the veterans of this Nation. It is time to put these men and women back to work. I call, and continue to call, on the majority to put an end to this real crisis—because they can—and reopen the government.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. Kaine. Madam President, I stand to tell the story of a great Virginian named Vidisha. This is a picture of Vidisha and her son Ayan, who came to a Federal employee roundtable that I did last Friday morning.

I have told stories on the floor about Virginians who are affected personally—worrying about missing mortgage payments, having to reschedule medical appointments, having to draw money out of an IRA and pay a tax penalty because of the shutdown. But I thought it was interesting that Vidisha came in and talked just a little bit about her own anxiety and the anxiety of everybody she works with. But what she really wanted to talk about was how the shutdown hurts the American public.

She works for probably the smallest Agency in the Federal Government, the Chemical Safety Board, with 40 employees and a budget of \$11 million or \$12 million. This is a small Agency, and they have one job: Investigate chemical spills—not to find fault, not to help a lawyer, but investigate chemical spills so that they can determine what went wrong, to prevent future chemical spills that are going to hurt Americans. Because of the shutdown, she and her colleagues—those 40—are not doing that job.

President Trump tweeted last weekend that the reason he is forcing the shutdown is he promised to protect the safety and security of the American public. He is hurting the safety and security of the American public.

Vidisha said that during the shutdown there has been a major chemical spill in Houston, TX. Normally, the investigators would be on it immediately to do the investigation, to give recommendations, and to reduce the risk of a spill at that facility or any other. But because of the shutdown, Vidisha and her staff are not investigating. How does this protect the safety and security of the American public—by leaving a major chemical spill with potentially life-threatening consequences uninvestigated and unresponded to?

This President's claim that he is helping the safety and security of the American people is a flat-out lie. You are hurting the security of the American people when you disable people like Vidisha and her colleagues from investigating chemical spills, from interdicting drugs if you are a Coast Guard, ATF, or DEA agent, or from doing law enforcement investigations if you are an FBI agent.

The President is hurting the security of this country. It is time to reopen government and put the security of Americans first.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, I have a simple request for my Republican colleagues, and that is this: Open the government. Open the government. There have been too many people suffering for too long for this to go on any further.

One of those people is named Scott Pekalib. He lives in Hilo, HI, and works for the U.S. Geological Survey. He has had a rough few months.

In October, his husband Jay went into the hospital for a routine surgery that went horribly wrong. He went into cardiac arrest and was in an induced coma for several days. He had to be flown to another island to receive the care that was necessary. Scott and Jay spent all of their savings to get through this ordeal. After paying for medicine, hotels, and airfare, they were living paycheck to paycheck.

Now, because of this government shutdown, Scott's paycheck reads zero. He doesn't know how he is going to buy gas to take his husband to the doctor or how they are going to pay the bills that are due. Scott is making impossible choices between buying the prescription drugs he needs and the ones that his husband needs. All of this pain and suffering is because the Senate will not vote to reopen the government.

So I ask my Republican friends to call for a vote, and if the President vetoes the bill, let's act like a separate, coequal branch of government and override that veto. That is our prerogative in the United States, and that is our obligation in the U.S. Senate—to do what is best for the Nation, for the health, safety, and economic security of all of our constituents.

Let's reopen the government.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, we have heard from a number of our colleagues today about personal stories that are happening to real live people in their home States—people who have not received a paycheck and are facing fear about what they are going to do in the coming days.

We have a responsibility—and I think I speak on behalf of Republicans and Democrats both here. We need to open government. We have disagreements all the time in Congress over different issues. Certainly, we cannot put these people's lives at risk and leave them as pawns in our States. Open up government, and then have a discussion about the issues we disagree on.

I know the Senator from Minnesota expected to be here, but I also see on the floor the Senator from Georgia, who would like to speak. I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Georgia be allowed to speak and the Senator from Minnesota, when she returns.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Washington very much for her courtesy. I will be brief, and I will be very succinct. In fact, I will be responding to some of the things that Senator SCHATZ from Hawaii and others have said on the floor.

I am going to respond to myself. I made a speech here only yesterday, about 2:30, in which I talked about the frustration that I have and that most Georgians have with the fact that the government is shut down, and I talked about who is losing.

We are losing. The government loses more money when it shuts down than it makes any other time. Shutting down is a losing proposition all the way around, and we are exemplifying the best way to lose because we are not doing anything to solve the problem.

I have a solution I am going to propose, specifically, right now. I am not going to put my name on it to be the lead name. I don't care who gets the credit. I am ready for some solutions. I am going to talk about some very serious things right now and some very difficult things, but we are in a serious, difficult problem. We have serious problems, and we need serious people to solve them.

In the United States today, at our ports, our airports, and our highways—every way you can cross the border to come into the United States of America—we charge fees for all kinds of things, and we have for years. We have trust funds, like Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund and things like that. People come across our borders all the time. In Smuggler's Gulch in San Diego, they come in on an eight-lane highway, flooding into America in the morning to go to work and flooding out of America in the afternoon to go home to bed, and we charge for that.

A constituent of mine called me last night, a gentleman I know very well, who is a very successful businessperson. He said: JOHNNY, you all are fighting over this border wall or how you fund it or who gets credit for it. I saw your speech. Have you ever thought of this?

I listened. I listened, I thought, and I said: You know, I haven't.

I got my staff to get me the information, and it all works. It makes sense, and I think it would make sense to the American people. I think it would make sense to the President of the United States, the Democratic Party, and the Republican Party as well. If we all start tonight, even, and decide whether we want to sign it or not, we can do it together. Who gets the credit for it stops, and we fight over something that makes more sense fighting over than having a border that leaks and an immigration program that doesn't work.

Here is the idea. We establish a fee in the United States of America through our ports, through our airports, through all the different ways you come here. You create a trust fund for

that money to go into, and it is designated for the security of our borders—our Canadian border and our Mexican border.

That is it. They charge. Someone entering the country pays. If it is a bus that comes in 10 times a day, you know they don't pay 10 times the amount that somebody comes in once a day. We will figure that out, but create a mechanism.

If you use the current mechanisms that are being used to collect moneys today in our Departments, we would raise \$2.5 billion a year doing that. Did you hear me? \$2.5 billion. If we had \$2.5 billion, we wouldn't have a problem anymore.

You could argue over what you build. That doesn't matter when we have security. Security is what we want. This Senate and House can get together at the White House, we get in a room, and we say: What do we want to charge? To whom do we want to give the responsibility? What is the goal?

The goal is to secure the border—a mechanism to fund securing the border—and to get off this argument of who is right, whether it is Democrats or Republicans. We are just arguing about something that doesn't matter. What matters is the American people. What matters is how their Representatives are handling their problems. What matters is what you and I are doing to get this whole argument that is going on and put it aside.

I am here to tell you, I am throwing an idea out that I think is a good idea. A very smart man gave it to me. I didn't think of it. I thought about it all last night. I couldn't think of anything wrong with it. I am sure somebody will be able to come up with something that is wrong with it.

It pays for it. We decide where the money goes, and it goes for security. We don't argue over what type of security because that is not the issue. The issue is we want it secure.

What we have had is that we have had a couple of leaders who argued about how you secure it, not whether or not you can secure it. You can always argue about how. I like pink better than purple, but I don't let that stop me from buying a black shirt if it is the only shirt I can get.

It is time we decide what it is we want. We want security. We want to put the government back to work. We want the American people to get the benefits they deserve, and we want a mechanism to do it—that is, a simple mechanism to do it. We already do it everywhere. We do the passenger facility charge.

The distinguished speaker sitting in the Chair today knows that. He flies here every week and pays \$7.50, I think, per ticket here and per ticket out. It pays for the security of airports. We do this all over the place. Let's do it here.

When you ask anybody what is probably the biggest problem in America, they say the biggest problem is that the American Senate and the American

House will not sit down and get the work done.

After that, we haven't even opened the door to see if we can find a solution. This opens the door to a solution. I am telling you, as a representative from the State of Georgia, representing 10.5 million people in this Senate, we can solve our problem today—not tomorrow, but today—with the action of our Finance Committee and our leadership and the President of the United States, by not deciding who gets credit or who gets blame but deciding it is time enough for funding games to be over with. It is time for us to get down to business.

We all took an oath a few months ago when we were sworn in, saying that is what we wanted to do, and now we are avoiding it every single day.

I will not take any more time. I know the Senator from Texas is here, and the lovely Senator from Minnesota is here, and they are two very good representatives in the Senate of the United States of America.

Don't forget about this idea. I am going to talk about it a lot. I don't want it to be the Isakson amendment or the Isakson idea. I want it to be our idea, America's idea. I want to fund it with Americans' money, to solve America's borders and get our immigration system solved and get us off of dead center and talking about nothing and mainly down center lane.

I want to end with what Zell Miller told me. Zell was a Senator at one time. He beat me for Governor of Georgia in 1990. In our last debate in that Senate race—it was a pretty good race. I had gotten pretty close. In fact, if my grandchildren had been old enough, it would have almost been won by me, if I could embellish the stories a little more.

At the end of the story, we had a minute each to close our speech. I closed my remarks with a 1-minute statement. I thought it was pretty good. Zell leaned back, with that twang of Zell's and said: You know, ladies and gentlemen, if you see a turtle sitting on a fence post on a country road, there is one thing you know for sure: He did not get there by himself.

I know for sure right now we are going nowhere because we are not talking about the problem. I know for sure that it is time for us to do the simple thing; that is, to solve it. It is not the hard thing, and that is to think of other reasons why we can't solve it. I, for one, will do everything I can do to let the people I am representing here know I am doing everything I can to get it open. I don't care what we have done. I am not going to call anybody a name. I am not going to do anything like that. I am not going to claim it for my idea. I hope nobody will steal it and claim it for theirs and cause us problems.

Let's just get to work. There is no problem we can't solve that we don't want to, and there is no problem we can solve if we don't want to solve it.

God bless you, Mr. President, for presiding today, and God bless the United States of America.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I appreciate the sentiment of the Senator from Georgia, and I remember earlier last year when we were both part of discussions to try to resolve an earlier shutdown issue and an earlier issue related to immigration reform. We put together a bipartisan bill involving the Dreamers, and we got some broad support on our side. Unfortunately, the White House, in the end, was not supportive of that agreement, even though the Senator from Georgia had worked so hard.

I think we can't rule out, as much as we have tried and will continue to try, to come up with bipartisan solutions like the majority and the minority leader did in December that we all supported and would have prevented this shutdown. We can't take out the element of the fact that a number of times we have been gut-punched, basically, when we have tried to do that. That doesn't mean that the discussion shouldn't continue, and I appreciate his good work on that.

I want to discuss one Minnesotan, Kathleen DeMaster, who has been affected by this and her family. She works for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Minneapolis. She is currently furloughed. This is Kathleen and her daughter. She says:

My situation is becoming desperate. . . . I accepted my position with the federal government only a few months ago because it is a fantastic way for me to better myself and my career. I am passionate about public service and have enjoyed my job very much since I started. While accepting this position improved my situation, I have lived paycheck to paycheck. . . . This has not changed unfortunately. I am a single mother and a homeowner. And while I am college educated. . . . I have struggled to get where I am now. It has never been easy, and unfortunately, this has only made life more difficult. My funds are exhausted. At this point in time, I don't have the money to pay for my mortgage or for childcare for my daughter. The money I will receive for unemployment insurance will not cover everything I need [fit to].

Unfortunately this has put me in an untenable situation. Do I risk losing my home or do I risk having my daughter lose her daycare and being unable to work when I am recalled?

In other words, she can maybe lose the daycare because she is at home now, but she is not going to be able to have the daycare when she goes back to work, when she can.

These are the choices I (and many others, I am sure) are facing right now.

This may be a story you have heard before, but I felt it needs to be shared until it is heard by the right ears.

These are this woman's words—"the right ears."

I am at a loss for what else to do, and I'm terrified for what it means for my daughter and myself.

Kathleen is doing everything she can do to provide for her daughter. She re-

cently started picking up shifts with Instacart, the grocery delivery service, just to make ends meet. If this shutdown drags on—in her words—she is simply at a loss about how she and her daughter will get by.

In my State there are 6,100 other Federal workers with these stories. They are not being paid, and each of these workers has a face and a name. It is time to end the shutdown and reopen the government.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

#### TRIBUTE TO JOYCE SIBLEY

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I rise today to give tribute to a great American, a great Texan, and a 32-year veteran of this institution who has dedicated her career to serving the needs of her fellow citizens. Her name is Joyce Sibley.

She has led my team of caseworkers in Texas for the last 6 years, and she is now retiring. Joyce started working in the U.S. Senate in 1971, working for John Tower of Texas, answering the phones at his Austin office.

Since then, Joyce has become a living legend among Texas caseworkers because she simply doesn't take no for an answer, and she always goes the extra mile and more to help someone in need. Indeed, her work has extended so many extra miles beyond our State boundaries that it is difficult to comprehend.

"To move mountains" is a figurative expression, but when I say Joyce has moved battleships, I mean it literally. During the Albanian civil war of 1997, Joyce got the 6th Fleet to come ashore and help rescue nearly 100 Americans on a beach, including several Texans.

The office of my predecessor, Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, was in communication with the Texans throughout that scary night in which the American evacuees were huddled at the Port of Durres in Albania, having been sent there by the U.S. embassy. The Albanian Task Force at the State Department reported that everyone had been evacuated, but the Americans still trapped there disagreed and started calling offices in Houston and Austin.

Joyce and her team had to give up on the State Department's part and, instead, they transferred a cell phone call from that beach in Albania directly to a Pentagon duty officer who contacted the Texans and connected them with the 6th Fleet. Together, they coordinated a Zodiac evacuation in the early morning hours.

Joyce was instrumental in organizing their escape.

There was another occasion, when a soldier was wrongfully convicted of counterfeiting in South Korea, after copying and printing Korean currency in order to test the quality of his new printer. There was no intent and no evidence of any attempt to distribute fake Korean currency.

After being convicted and imprisoned for months, largely abandoned by his command, the Texas office asked the

Korean Government to take another look at the case, and the conviction was reversed. The airman returned to serve with distinction in San Antonio, thanks in part to the amazing casework skills of Joyce Sibley.

Likewise, when the earthquake hit Haiti, there were several Texans buried in the rubble at one of the local hotels. Joyce and others stayed in touch with the family members, set up regular briefings with the State Department, and kept the family closely informed until all were found and accounted for.

The Haitian Government even arrested a group of Texas missionaries and charged them with kidnapping for providing relief and housing to orphaned Haitian children. A few tense weeks followed, but they were all freed once Joyce helped to turn up the heat.

There are too many stories to list about Joyce's helping families with heartbreaking international adoption situations in Romania, Russia, Haiti, China, Korea, Guatemala, and Ethiopia.

Here is one of my favorite stories. Last fall, a heart surgeon contacted our office on a Thursday evening. He had been traveling out of the country. When he was coming back to Houston, he realized he had lost his passport. He was supposed to travel to Houston overnight and go straight to the hospital to perform several surgeries. Joyce, working with other members of our staff, was able to get a government official to meet his plane to confirm his identity and to get him through customs at 6 a.m. on Friday morning.

He called me when he was on the way to the hospital and said that thanks to our office, thanks to Joyce, he was able to make it there on time to perform lifesaving surgeries.

There are quite literally thousands of Texans whose lives have been made better by Joyce's decision to stay in Texas and to devote her professional time to helping families who needed help, often in times of great stress. Dealing with the Federal Government, the often maddening leviathan of Federal bureaucracy, Joyce was an expert at getting that leviathan to move and helping Texans who were frustrated and needed relief.

Whether it has been handling an international crisis or ensuring that a veteran gets his or her paycheck, Joyce has been tireless on behalf of Texans in need of help and guidance. The hallmark of a great caseworker is knowing the system, having great contacts at the multitude of Federal Agencies, and pushing back whenever she heard the word "no." Instead, she would ask, isn't there something else we could do to help this soldier, to help this veteran, to help this Texan? So many times, thinking of the "something else we can do" was exactly what was needed.

Joyce has been an irreplaceable asset to the U.S. Senate and to the people of Texas. The good news is that everyone who has worked with her has her spirit

in their blood now, has been trained directly, hands-on, by Joyce. It is in their DNA now to go that extra mile and to try to get to yes, no matter the obstacles, when they are looking out for and fighting for Texans. That is her legacy—a team inspired by her leadership. And I know that legacy will endure.

Joyce starts a new adventure at the end of this month as she begins her well-earned retirement. My team will be a little bit poorer for having lost her, but the Senate, the people of Texas, and thousands of families she has assisted over the course of nearly five decades are much richer for having had her on their team.

Thank you, Joyce, for your work, your passion, your patriotism, and most of all, your shining heart. It has been a pleasure, an honor, and a privilege to serve the people of Texas alongside you. God bless.

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.

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

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

#### CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on S.J. Res. 2, a joint resolution disapproving the President's proposal to take an action relating to the application of certain sanctions with respect to the Russian Federation.

John Thune, Mike Crapo, Tom Cotton, Todd Young, John Cornyn, Jerry Moran, John Boozman, Deb Fischer, John Hoeven, Susan M. Collins, Cory Gardner, Dan Sullivan, Marco Rubio, Richard Burr, John Barrasso, Pat Roberts, Roger F. Wicker, Thom Tillis, Shelley Moore Capito, Mitch McConnell.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on S.J. Res. 2, a joint resolution disapproving the President's proposal to take an action relating to the application of certain sanctions with respect to the Russian Federation, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROMNEY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber wishing to vote or to change their vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 57, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 6 Leg.]

#### YEAS—57

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Murray
Bennet	Harris	Peters
Blumenthal	Hassan	Reed
Booker	Hawley	Rosen
Boozman	Heinrich	Rubio
Brown	Hirono	Sasse
Cantwell	Jones	Schatz
Cardin	Kaine	Schumer
Carper	Kennedy	Shaheen
Casey	King	Sinema
Collins	Klobuchar	Smith
Coons	Leahy	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Tester
Cotton	Markey	Udall
Daines	McSally	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Menendez	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Warren
Feinstein	Moran	Whitehouse
Gardner	Murphy	Wyden

#### NAYS—42

Alexander	Fischer	Portman
Barrasso	Graham	Risch
Blackburn	Grassley	Roberts
Blunt	Hoeven	Romney
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Burr	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Capito	Isakson	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Johnson	Shelby
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	McConnell	Tillis
Cruz	Murkowski	Toomey
Enzi	Paul	Wicker
Ernst	Perdue	Young

#### NOT VOTING—1

Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 57, the nays are 42.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

Under the previous order, cloture not having been invoked, S.J. Res. 2 is returned to the calendar.

The Chair recognizes the majority leader.

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#### NO TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR ABORTION AND ABORTION INSURANCE FULL DISCLOSURE ACT OF 2019—Motion to Proceed

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 11, S. 109.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to the consideration of S. 109, a bill to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk on the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the