

Grassley	Landrieu	Rubio
Hagan	Lee	Scott
Harkin	Manchin	Sessions
Hatch	McCain	Shaheen
Heinrich	McCaskill	Shelby
Heitkamp	McConnell	Stabenow
Heller	Mikulski	Tester
Hoeven	Moran	Thune
Isakson	Nelson	Toomey
Johanns	Paul	Udall (CO)
Johnson (SD)	Portman	Vitter
Johnson (WI)	Pryor	Warner
Kaine	Risch	Wicker
Kirk	Roberts	
Klobuchar	Rockefeller	

NOT VOTING—4

Coburn	Murkowski
Inhofe	Whitehouse

The amendment (No. 931) was rejected.

Mr. REID. I move to reconsider the vote and move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time until 5:30 p.m. be for a period of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each during that time, and that at 5:30 p.m. Senator STABENOW be recognized.

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

The Senator from Washington.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—
H. CON. RES. 25

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, it has now been 59 days since the Senate and the House passed our budget resolutions. The American people are now expecting us to get together and do everything possible to bridge the partisan divide and come to a bipartisan deal. On this side the Senate Democrats are ready to get to work. Unfortunately, despite their focus over the past 2 years on the need to return to regular order, Republicans have been refusing to allow us to move to a bipartisan budget conference.

Many Republicans, including the ranking member on the Budget Committee, Senator SESSIONS, had been very clear up until recently that after the Senate engages in an open and fair budget markup process—and these are his words—“the work of conferencing must begin.”

Minority Leader MCCONNELL said in January that if the Senate budget is different from the House budget, then “send it off to conference. That’s how things used to work around here. We used to call it legislating.” I could not agree more with Minority Leader MCCONNELL’s words from back in January. Over the past few weeks we have tried to move to conference eight times, and each time Senate Republicans have stood and said no.

They have managed to stall for weeks now, but their excuses for not

wanting to move to conference are changing. At first Republicans told us that we needed “a framework” before they would allow us to move to conference, although they never explained what that meant. And, frankly, a budget is a framework. Then the story changed, and they told us they would only let us move to conference if we made certain guarantees about the outcome. Then last week the story changed again, and Senate Republicans claimed that despite the fact that we engaged in a fair and open budget process in the Senate less than 2 months ago, they think we need a do-over, with another 50 hours of debate on top of the 50 hours we have already done and another round of unlimited amendments on top of the unlimited amendments that were moved already.

This is absurd. First of all, to claim that regular order involves a second full Senate budget debate is simply not true. The Senate has never been forced to go through a full debate and open amendment process twice just to get to conference—not one case. Completely unprecedented. In fact, every single time since 1994 that the Senate moved to conference, it was done by unanimous consent, with bipartisan support, which is the way it ought to be done.

Second of all, the Senate engaged in a full and open debate in which any Member could offer any budget amendment they wanted to. We did that a few months ago. I know all of my colleagues remember this. I certainly remember this.

I would be happy to quote some of what was said about the process if any reminders are needed because as that debate came to a close in the wee hours of the morning, Minority Leader MCCONNELL said the Senate had just engaged in “an open and complete and full debate.” He continued and said, “I know everyone is exhausted, and people may not feel it at the moment, but this is one of the Senate’s finest days in recent years, and I commend everyone who has participated in this extraordinary debate.”

My ranking member, Senator SESSIONS, said the Budget Committee markup was “an open process” where “everybody had the ability to offer amendments.”

Senator SESSIONS said on the floor, as debate was wrapping up, he was thankful that the Republicans had “free ability to speak and debate” and for “helping us move a lot of amendments fairly and equitably tonight.”

There is no question the Senate engaged in a fair and open and lengthy debate about the budget before we passed it. There is absolutely no good reason to ask that we do this all over unless the intention is to simply stall the process and push us closer to a crisis.

Instead of scrambling to find new excuses for their budget conference flipflops, I hope Senate Republicans realize their opposition to bipartisan negotiations is not sustainable and will

not allow us to get to the table and move on this matter.

I know there are Members who do not agree with the budget that was passed. They will have another opportunity to fight for changes in a bipartisan conference, which is how we do this. That is the responsible and appropriate path forward, and I hope the Senate Republican leaders decide to move back to the position they maintained just a few months ago. I know a number of our colleagues on the Republican side have said to me privately and in public that they believe we should move to conference. I hope we can do that. The challenges before our country in terms of our debt and deficit and the investments that need to be made and the certainty that Americans are looking to us for cannot be completed until we go to conference and work out our differences and come back and move this forward.

I hope this time when I ask for unanimous consent to go to conference Senate Republicans will join with us so the American people can see an open conference move to a debate and solve this very challenging problem we have in front of us.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 33, H. Con. Res. 25; that the amendment which is at the desk, the text of S. Con. Res. 8, the budget resolution passed by the Senate, be inserted in lieu thereof; that H. Con. Res. 25, as amended, be agreed to; the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table; that the Senate insist on its amendment, request a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses; and that the chair be authorized to appoint conferees on the part of the Senate, all with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). Is there objection?

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Reserving the right to object, it has now been 59 days that the opposition has been trying to orchestrate a backroom deal to raise the debt ceiling. Raising the debt ceiling is an incredibly important debate and shouldn’t be done in the back room by a few people. It shouldn’t be done through parliamentary trickery or chicanery. It should be done out in the full and open and under the ordinary rules of the Senate.

We are now borrowing \$40,000 every second, \$4 billion a day. We must borrow from China to run the ordinary functions of our government. In fact, it is worse. We borrow from China to send money to China. We borrow money from China to send money to Pakistan. We build bridges in Pakistan with money borrowed from China. It can’t go on. No American family can continue to spend money endlessly that they don’t have.

All we are asking is for a commonsense resolution that says we can’t keep borrowing.

What I ask is unanimous consent that the Senator modify her request so