

continue to do. I do feel strongly on their behalf that the government should open and the 21,000 of them who have been wrongly laid off by the actions of a minority—the government needs to open, and the debt of the United States most certainly needs to be honored so this economic recovery can continue.

But there are plenty of things we can negotiate. The debt of the country is too high. We do need to have some earned benefit and potential entitlement reform—not necessarily cutting benefits from people who count on them but for the government to do its part to meet people halfway. There are always efficiencies that can be created if we work together.

So on behalf of my constituents, I am very hopeful that we can find a way forward. I think Senator REID has been providing extraordinary leadership, and hopefully we can find a way forward.

I would briefly mention that there have been some very good conversations going on about funding for the city of Washington—not a part of the Federal Government—which has not been resolved yet, but Republicans, Democrats, and the White House are working together to find a way so the District of Columbia, the city of Washington—with its own mayor and city council, its own budget, its own local funds—does not have to be caught up in a very tough circumstance that is not of their making. They are not part of the Federal Government, and neither is New York, Chicago, New Orleans, or Baltimore. They are separate cities, and they should be treated that way. We haven't found a way yet, but we are working on it.

I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I appreciate the kind words of the Senator from Louisiana, but I want the RECORD spread with the work she has done that I have seen in our years together in the Senate. No one has been more of an advocate for a State than the senior Senator from Louisiana. What she did after that terrible hurricane hit that area is now legendary—the ability that she had to change what had been standard procedures and law in this country for decades. We changed that for a lot of reasons. One was her advocacy. We did it because of her.

In fact, the Democrats in the Senate voted for things they never voted for before because of the good Senator from Louisiana. It was not done to help on a temporary basis but long term for the State of Louisiana.

I hope they understand what a difference one person can make. She has made a difference and she has changed things forever in Louisiana already. I am sure the best is yet to come.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period for morning business, with Senators per-

mitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

PRELIMINARY TALKS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as most know now—we did a press event so everybody knows, I guess, but I will say it again—I had a meeting with Senators McConnell, Alexander, and Schumer this morning to work on issues before us. The conversations are preliminary, but we are talking. I hope everyone understands how positive this is. It is the first discussions we have had here, period, during the whole pendency of this artificially driven government shutdown and not raising the debt limit when we should.

I am confident Senator MCCONNELL understands that defaulting on our debt would mean millions of jobs in the United States, not thousands, not hundreds of thousands but millions. It could halt Social Security checks, Medicare payments, and even paychecks for our men and women in uniform.

Democratic Senators agree with President Obama and we share a simple goal. We want to reopen the government and pay our bills so we can move forward in good-faith negotiations for a long-term budget to protect jobs, the middle class, and the American economy. That is our goal.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:02 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following joint resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.J. Res. 76. Joint resolution making continuing appropriations for the National Nuclear Security Administration for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes.

At 12:10 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House disagrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2642) to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes, and agrees to the conference asked by the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints the following Members to be the managers of the conference on the part of the House:

From the Committee on Agriculture, for consideration of the House amendment and the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. LUCAS, KING of Iowa, NEUGEBAUER, ROGERS of Alabama, CONAWAY, THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, CRAWFORD, Mrs. ROBY, Mrs. NOEM, Messrs. DENHAM, RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, PETERSON, MCINTYRE, COSTA, WALZ, SCHRADER, MCGOVERN, Ms. DELBENE, Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, and Mr. VELA.

From the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for consideration of title III of the House amendment, and title III of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. ROYCE, MARINO, and ENGEL.

From the Committee on Ways and Means, for consideration of sections 1207 and 1301 of the House amendment, and sections 1301, 1412, 1435, and 4204 of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. CAMP, SAM JOHNSON of Texas, and LEVIN.

For consideration of the House amendment to the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Mr. SOUTHERLAND and Ms. FUDGE.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following joint resolution was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

H.J. Res. 79. Joint resolution making continuing appropriations for certain components of the Department of Homeland Security for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following joint resolution was read the first time:

H.J. Res. 76. Joint resolution making continuing appropriations for the National Nuclear Security Administration for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. CARPER, and Mr. UDALL of New Mexico):

S. 1571. A bill to permit the District of Columbia to obligate and expend local funds in accordance with the local budget adopted by the Council of the District of Columbia during any period of fiscal year 2014 in which no Federal law appropriating such local funds is in effect, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS ON OCTOBER 11, 2013

S. 541

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 541, a bill to prevent human health threats posed by the consumption of equines raised in the United States.

S. 610

At the request of Mr. JOHANNIS, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 610, a bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to repeal certain limitations on health care benefits.