

This budget is all of those things, and I urge our colleagues to support it.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

THE BUDGET

Mr. REID. Mr. President, these budgets we deal with are more than just a piece of paper with a lot of numbers. Each budget we put forward and the Republicans put forward are statements of our values, and it tells Americans basically whose side we are on.

I think, when we look at these budgets, we will find the budget we have propounded—and we will see when the votes take place this week—contains values that put the middle class first. Ours is a budget that supports hard-working families, creates jobs, and invests in our future.

The Republicans, by contrast, have developed a budget that attacks the middle class and serves the interests of special interests and the superwealthy. How can I say that? I say that because it is the truth.

For example, here are some of the priorities the Republicans are proposing in their budget. They want to take away health care from 16.4 million Americans now insured through ObamaCare. The Senate Republicans' budget wreaks havoc on Medicare at the expense of America's seniors. The Senate Republicans' budget makes drastic cuts to Medicaid and undercuts millions of families who rely on it to pay for nursing homes and other care. A lot of the care we have in nursing homes is not for people who are indigent; it is for people who have had to go to Medicaid because everything they have worked for their whole life is gone.

The budget the Republicans are pushing guts nutrition assistance for those in need, slices job training and employment services for millions of American workers, and it cuts billions of financial aid for college students. That is the truth.

These items are all attacking middle-class priorities. The Republicans, as usual, have gone the extra mile to protect special interests and the super-rich.

Incredibly, even as they take money away from hard-working families, seniors, and students, Republicans will not close a single tax loophole to reduce the deficit—not one. Do they indirectly pay those super-rich more money? Of course they do.

Forbes magazine had an article. For 2 years, between 2011 and 2013, the top 14 richest people in America gained during that period of time almost \$200 billion. It is hard to comprehend, but it is true—14 people, about \$200 billion.

Would the budget that has been put forth by the Republicans end tax breaks for companies that ship jobs

overseas? No. Would they close loopholes for wealthy hedge fund managers? No. Would they take away wasteful and unneeded breaks for these huge oil and gas companies? No, not a single one. Would they ask millionaires and even billionaires to pay a penny more? No, not one.

Attacking the middle class while protecting the superwealthy isn't just irresponsible, some would say it is immoral.

There is more. The budget is dishonest. It claims to balance the budget, but it doesn't. To talk about balancing the budget over 10 years is so foolish and so untrue.

USA TODAY—the newspaper—said the Republicans' budget relies "heavily on huge and politically unlikely spending cuts and bewildering gimmicks that don't begin to add up."

The New York Times, in one of its op-eds, said the budget is a "trillion dollar con job."

I am not saying this. We have USA TODAY and the New York Times.

But who is being fooled here? In fact, there is one area where so far many people have been fooled and they have been fooled a lot.

During the markup of the budget resolution, Senate Republicans claimed to increase defense spending by adding an extra \$38 billion in war funding, known as overseas contingency operations or OCO as we call it. The Republican leader talked about that a few minutes ago, but that money isn't even close to being real. Because of what seems to be a drafting error, not one extra dollar can be spent on defense above the sequestration caps.

The resolution currently on the floor puts a strict cap on OCO spending. For whatever reason, Republicans neglected to increase the cap to allow for the additional \$38 billion for defense. In other words, the Republicans' extra defense money is a fraud, a hoax, and certainly a political gimmick.

We want to provide real sequestration relief, which has so bewildered the country in so many different ways, not only to defense but also the National Institutes of Health and virtually every program in America. We are going to propose just that as we move forward to get rid of sequestration.

So we all look forward on this side to the debate. When it is over, Americans will have no doubt which party stands with the middle class and which party stands with special interests, millionaires, and billionaires.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 2016

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. Con. Res. 11, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 11) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025.

Pending:

Sanders/Wyden amendment No. 323, to create millions of middle class jobs by investing in our nation's infrastructure paid for by raising revenue through closing loopholes in the corporate and international tax system.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Colleagues, good morning. Working with Senator SANDERS yesterday, we made good progress on opening day for the budget resolution. It might not have been as fun as being at opening day for baseball, but getting underway on the first balanced budget resolution this Senate has seen in nearly 20 years was pretty exciting for me, and I appreciate the good work and the full debate we have had.

Today, I am looking forward to more work on a variety of amendment ideas for the resolution. Some Senators want to debate amendment ideas that have to do with the budget and some Senators want to debate amendment ideas that have nothing to do with the budget. So we will hear from some Senators today on issues such as our spending caps or the sequester, how best to preserve and protect Social Security, and what is the best way to ensure women are treated fairly in the workforce.

Other Senators may want to discuss items such as how to treat the waterways of the United States, free from overreach from the EPA, or how our communities and localities are under siege from Washington when it comes to ideas about taxing carbon or coal, and Senators may wish to discuss how our national security is best served by the spending levels contemplated in the budget. But we will also hear about something that really interests me, as it marries the numbers our budget resolution carries with the work our committees and Congress can do once the budget is passed.

I think one of the frustrations of the other side is this is a fairly general budget because it sets the spending limits for the committees and then builds in some reserve funds for some flexibility. It doesn't go into the specifics of exactly how the committees are to operate. The reason for that is the committees are the people who have at least an intense interest in that field or maybe even a lot of expertise. When we try to preclude what they are doing by what we do in the budget, it won't work.

We will also hear about something that marries the numbers our budget resolution carries with the work our committees and Congress can do once the budget is passed. The statutory deadline for passing the budget is April 15. Just prior to that, we are going to have a 2-week recess, which shortens the amount of time we have to work.

I would remind everybody that Republicans have only been in charge for a few weeks and are going to pass the first budget in 6 years. That is a pretty fast track to be on, but I am pleased with where we are at the moment.

Later on this morning, the Senate will consider an amendment to help improve care for children with medical complexity within Medicaid. Children with medical complexity require intensive health care services. These children often have two or more serious chronic conditions, and often see six or more specialists and a dozen or more physicians. They also often require care that takes them across State lines. There are 2 million of these children on Medicaid.

Reflecting a bipartisan bill, Senator PORTMAN intends to offer an amendment to create a reserve fund in anticipation of committee action that recognizes the critical importance of Medicaid to children with medical complexity, and the need for greater coordination and integration of care for this population within Medicaid. If Congress can write a bill that fits this reserve fund, then we can benefit children with medical complexity and their families. I look forward to a good debate and several votes in the Senate today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I look forward to continuing to work with Senator ENZI in a thoughtful and important process, and I thank the Senator for his civility. I think we are going to have an interesting few days.

To my mind, the basic issue surrounding this budget debate is whether we address the enormous needs facing a declining middle class and whether we come forth with ideas that create the jobs—the millions of jobs our people need—whether we raise the wages that millions of workers desperately need who today are working for \$7.50 an hour, \$8 an hour, whether we deal with the scandal of pay equity in this country where women are making 78 cents on the dollar compared to men, whether we make sure we do not cut Social Security at a time when there are so many vulnerable seniors out there whose entire income or almost their entire income is Social Security.

In my view, we cannot balance the budget on the most vulnerable people in this country. We cannot cut the Meals on Wheels Program. We cannot cut Head Start. Essentially at a time when the middle class is shrinking, we cannot balance the budget on the backs of the elderly, the children, the sick, and the poor.

On my side of the aisle in the Democratic Caucus, what people are looking at is massive wealth and income inequality taking place in America. Senator REID a few minutes ago made the point that in the last 2 years alone—the last 2 years alone—the wealthiest 14 people in this country have seen

their wealth increase by over \$150 billion—in 2 years. That is more wealth than they have increased in 2 years than the bottom 40 percent of the American people own. That is pretty crazy. The richer are becoming phenomenally richer, and we have tens of millions of Americans struggling to keep their heads above water.

My Republican colleagues say, well, we want to deal with the deficit by cutting programs for the working families, lower income people, the people who are struggling, but we are not going to ask the wealthy or largest corporations in this country who are doing phenomenally well to pay an additional nickel in taxes. That does not make sense to me. I do not believe it makes sense to the American people.

AMENDMENT NO. 323, AS MODIFIED

Having said that, what I wish to do now is get to an amendment that is currently at the desk, and I ask that the pending amendment be modified with the changes that are at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment is so modified.

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

- On page 5, line 5, increase the amount by \$25,001,000,000.
- On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$51,201,000,000.
- On page 5, line 7, increase the amount by \$65,879,000,000.
- On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$71,784,000,000.
- On page 5, line 9, increase the amount by \$72,916,000,000.
- On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$73,405,000,000.
- On page 5, line 11, increase the amount by \$48,535,000,000.
- On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by \$22,338,000,000.
- On page 5, line 13, increase the amount by \$7,660,000,000.
- On page 5, line 14, increase the amount by \$1,755,000,000.
- On page 5, line 18, increase the amount by \$25,001,000,000.
- On page 5, line 19, increase the amount by \$51,201,000,000.
- On page 5, line 20, increase the amount by \$65,879,000,000.
- On page 5, line 21, increase the amount by \$71,784,000,000.
- On page 5, line 22, increase the amount by \$72,916,000,000.
- On page 5, line 23, increase the amount by \$73,405,000,000.
- On page 5, line 24, increase the amount by \$48,535,000,000.
- On page 5, line 25, increase the amount by \$22,338,000,000.
- On page 6, line 1, increase the amount by \$7,660,000,000.
- On page 6, line 2, increase the amount by \$1,755,000,000.
- On page 6, line 6, increase the amount by \$79,667,000,000.
- On page 6, line 7, increase the amount by \$79,667,000,000.
- On page 6, line 8, increase the amount by \$79,667,000,000.
- On page 6, line 9, increase the amount by \$79,667,000,000.
- On page 6, line 10, increase the amount by \$79,667,000,000.
- On page 6, line 11, increase the amount by \$79,667,000,000.
- On page 6, line 19, increase the amount by \$25,001,000,000.

- On page 6, line 20, increase the amount by \$51,201,000,000.
- On page 6, line 21, increase the amount by \$65,879,000,000.
- On page 6, line 22, increase the amount by \$71,784,000,000.
- On page 6, line 23, increase the amount by \$72,916,000,000.
- On page 6, line 24, increase the amount by \$73,405,000,000.
- On page 6, line 25, increase the amount by \$48,535,000,000.
- On page 7, line 1, increase the amount by \$22,338,000,000.
- On page 7, line 2, increase the amount by \$7,660,000,000.
- On page 7, line 3, increase the amount by \$1,755,000,000.
- On page 19, line 3, increase the amount by \$3,000,000,000.
- On page 19, line 4, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.
- On page 19, line 7, increase the amount by \$3,000,000,000.
- On page 19, line 8, increase the amount by \$480,000,000.
- On page 19, line 10, increase the amount by \$3,000,000,000.
- On page 19, line 11, increase the amount by \$1,530,000,000.
- On page 19, line 13, increase the amount by \$3,000,000,000.
- On page 19, line 14, increase the amount by \$2,580,000,000.
- On page 19, line 16, increase the amount by \$3,000,000,000.
- On page 19, line 17, increase the amount by \$2,880,000,000.
- On page 19, line 19, increase the amount by \$3,000,000,000.
- On page 19, line 20, increase the amount by \$3,000,000,000.
- On page 19, line 23, increase the amount by \$2,970,000,000.
- On page 20, line 1, increase the amount by \$2,520,000,000.
- On page 20, line 5, increase the amount by \$1,470,000,000.
- On page 20, line 9, increase the amount by \$420,000,000.
- On page 20, line 13, increase the amount by \$11,000,000,000.
- On page 20, line 14, increase the amount by \$7,570,000,000.
- On page 20, line 17, increase the amount by \$11,000,000,000.
- On page 20, line 18, increase the amount by \$9,760,000,000.
- On page 20, line 21, increase the amount by \$11,000,000,000.
- On page 20, line 22, increase the amount by \$10,380,000,000.
- On page 20, line 25, increase the amount by \$11,000,000,000.
- On page 21, line 1, increase the amount by \$10,650,000,000.
- On page 21, line 4, increase the amount by \$11,000,000,000.
- On page 21, line 5, increase the amount by \$10,660,000,000.
- On page 21, line 8, increase the amount by \$11,000,000,000.
- On page 21, line 9, increase the amount by \$10,660,000,000.
- On page 21, line 13, increase the amount by \$3,090,000,000.
- On page 21, line 17, increase the amount by \$900,000,000.
- On page 21, line 21, increase the amount by \$280,000,000.
- On page 21, line 25, increase the amount by \$10,000,000.
- On page 23, line 20, increase the amount by \$1,000,000,000.
- On page 23, line 21, increase the amount by \$17,000,000.
- On page 23, line 24, increase the amount by \$1,000,000,000.

On page 23, line 25, increase the amount by \$177,000,000.

On page 24, line 3, increase the amount by \$1,000,000,000.

On page 24, line 4, increase the amount by \$360,000,000.

On page 24, line 7, increase the amount by \$1,000,000,000.

On page 24, line 8, increase the amount by \$627,000,000.

On page 24, line 10, increase the amount by \$1,000,000,000.

On page 24, line 11, increase the amount by \$885,000,000.

On page 24, line 13, increase the amount by \$1,000,000,000.

On page 24, line 14, increase the amount by \$968,000,000.

On page 24, line 18, increase the amount by \$983,000,000.

On page 24, line 22, increase the amount by \$823,000,000.

On page 25, line 1, increase the amount by \$640,000,000.

On page 25, line 5, increase the amount by \$373,000,000.

On page 25, line 9, increase the amount by \$60,667,000,000.

On page 25, line 10, increase the amount by \$14,494,000,000.

On page 25, line 13, increase the amount by \$60,667,000,000.

On page 25, line 14, increase the amount by \$37,754,000,000.

On page 25, line 17, increase the amount by \$60,667,000,000.

On page 25, line 18, increase the amount by \$50,344,000,000.

On page 25, line 21, increase the amount by \$60,667,000,000.

On page 25, line 22, increase the amount by \$54,432,000,000.

On page 25, line 25, increase the amount by \$60,667,000,000.

On page 26, line 1, increase the amount by \$54,806,000,000.

On page 26, line 4, increase the amount by \$60,667,000,000.

On page 26, line 5, increase the amount by \$54,962,000,000.

On page 26, line 9, increase the amount by \$40,517,000,000.

On page 26, line 13, increase the amount by \$17,260,000,000.

On page 26, line 17, increase the amount by \$4,670,000,000.

On page 26, line 21, increase the amount by \$582,000,000.

On page 27, line 2, increase the amount by \$4,000,000,000.

On page 27, line 3, increase the amount by \$2,890,000,000.

On page 27, line 6, increase the amount by \$4,000,000,000.

On page 27, line 7, increase the amount by \$3,030,000,000.

On page 27, line 10, increase the amount by \$4,000,000,000.

On page 27, line 11, increase the amount by \$3,265,000,000.

On page 27, line 14, increase the amount by \$4,000,000,000.

On page 27, line 15, increase the amount by \$3,495,000,000.

On page 27, line 18, increase the amount by \$4,000,000,000.

On page 27, line 19, increase the amount by \$3,685,000,000.

On page 27, line 22, increase the amount by \$4,000,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, increase the amount by \$3,815,000,000.

On page 28, line 3, increase the amount by \$975,000,000.

On page 28, line 7, increase the amount by \$835,000,000.

On page 28, line 11, increase the amount by \$600,000,000.

On page 28, line 15, increase the amount by \$370,000,000.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, what this amendment deals with is something I think virtually every Member of this body understands to be an enormously important issue, and the American people understand it as well, and that is our crumbling infrastructure and the fact we have to begin the process to substantially invest in our roads, our bridges, our water systems and our wastewater plants, our levees and our dams and our airports. The needs out there are enormous. When we do that, we can create millions of jobs at a time when we need to create millions of jobs. I heard Senator ENZI yesterday speaking on the issue. I think he reflects the views of many. I don't think there is a great debate on whether our infrastructure is crumbling. I don't think there is a great debate—and I speak as a former mayor—that if you allow your infrastructure to continue to crumble, it only becomes more expensive to rebuild it. I don't think there is a debate on that. The debate, of course, comes down to how you pay for it. That debate has been going on here for many years.

If anyone had a magical solution, I suspect it would have been brought forth already. But the proposal we are bringing forth calls for a \$478 billion investment over a 6-year period. That will be paid for by eliminating some outrageous corporate loopholes today that, among other things, allow large, profitable corporations to stash their profits in the Cayman Islands, in Bermuda, and in other tax havens and not have to pay one nickel in taxes to the U.S. Government. Our proposal is pretty simple. Let's eliminate some of those loopholes, let's take that money, let's invest in rebuilding our crumbling infrastructure, let's make our country more efficient, more productive, safer, and let us create millions of jobs.

The need for rebuilding our infrastructure should not be in doubt. One out of every nine bridges in our country is structurally deficient, and nearly one-quarter are functionally obsolete. Almost one-third of our roads are in poor or mediocre condition. And as everybody stuck in a traffic jam at this moment knows, more than 42 percent of urban highways are congested.

Much of our rail network is obsolete. We are competing against countries which have high-speed rail, which operates much more rapidly than our railroads do. America's airports are bursting at the seams and still rely on antiquated 1960s radar technology. More than 4,000 of our Nation's dams are considered deficient, and nearly 9 percent of all levees are likely to fail during a major flood. That is a pretty scary proposition. Our drinking water systems are nearing the end of their useful lives all over this country. Virtually every day there is another pipe which bursts, causing flooding in downtowns and wasting huge amounts of clean drinking water. Further, our waste-

water plants routinely fail during heavy rains, allowing all kinds of crap to go into our lakes and our rivers, which should not be the case. Our aging electrical grid has hundreds of avoidable power failures each year and is unacceptably vulnerable to cyber attacks.

Now \$478 billion may seem like a lot of money. It is a lot of money, but the American Society of Civil Engineers tells us we need to invest an additional \$1.6 trillion to get our infrastructure into a state of good repair by 2020. To be honest with you, while this amendment is a significant step forward, it does not go anywhere near as far as it should go.

I would hope on this amendment we would have strong bipartisan support. It is not good enough for people to continue to say what everybody acknowledges—yes, we need to rebuild our crumbling infrastructure, but, no, we don't know how we are going to come up with the money to do it. It is too late to keep expressing that rhetoric. We have heard it for too many years. Every day we don't act, it becomes more expensive for us to act.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to today make an important statement that, A, we cannot continue to delay rebuilding our crumbling infrastructure; that, B, when real unemployment in this country is not 5½ percent but 11 percent, when youth unemployment is 17 percent, when African-American youth unemployment is off the charts, we need a major jobs program to put our people back to work at decent wages. That is what work on infrastructure does. The time for rhetoric is gone. The time for action is now. Let's rebuild our crumbling infrastructure. Let's put people to work. Let's end outrageous corporate tax loopholes. Let's make our country safer, more efficient, and more productive. I ask for support for that important amendment which comes up for a vote I believe at around 12:00 or so.

I yield 5 minutes off the resolution to Senator BOXER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, if no one arrives, may I have 10 minutes?

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, yes, of course.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am so grateful to Senator SANDERS because he explains things like no one else. He takes it down to the average working family in America. That is really who we are here to protect, not the super top rich people. They are doing fine.

Senator SANDERS taught me something this morning. I am just going to make sure I remember it correctly. The wealth of the top 14 richest people in America in the last couple of years went up over \$100 billion.

How much was it?

Mr. SANDERS. It was \$157 billion in a 2-year period.

Mrs. BOXER. In a 2-year period—the wealthiest of the wealthiest, 14 people—that wealth rose \$157 billion. Yet

when we look at this Republican budget, those people get every benefit we can imagine. They are not asked to do a thing—a thing. When people are struggling sending their kids to college, Lord knows, when people are struggling trying to afford a new home, when people are struggling every day to make ends meet—some even to put nutritious food on the table—this budget is a blueprint of unfairness. This budget, this Republican budget, is a blueprint for another recession. It is a terrible budget, and it makes believe it balances. It doesn't balance one bit.

Our ranking member will explain the smoke and mirrors that have been used in this budget. I used to serve on the Budget Committee. Let me be clear to anyone within the sound of my voice. In recent times the only time the budget was balanced was when President Clinton was President, and only Democrats voted for his budget. We balanced the budget. And you know what; we created 23 million jobs because we invested in people, in education, in our children.

Not this budget—they cut—deep cuts out of domestic spending. They take \$236 billion over 10 years from non-defense. That means they are cutting education, scientific research, food safety, law enforcement, and every single program the middle class and working Americans depend on.

I want to thank the ranking member of the Budget Committee. He is taking on such leadership in his position here and on the Environment and Public Works Committee by calling attention to our failing infrastructure. There are 63,500 bridges that are structurally deficient in America, and 50 percent of our roads are in less than good condition. And what does this Republican budget do? By the way, this is a big problem for our businesses. They cut 17 percent of overall spending, ignoring the fact that our roads are in disrepair and ignoring the fact that we face the prospect of crumbling bridges. That is a blow to everyone who drives on our roads.

At a time when energy costs are weighing heavily on families and businesses, they cut 85 percent in overall energy spending, including weatherization funding. What are they thinking? When a middle class family weatherizes their home, the energy bill goes down. They are putting a tax on every middle class person who has to pay a heating bill. Energy efficiency grants, no—cut. Research to clean energy, cut. It is a blow to our consumers and to our efforts to mitigate climate change.

At a time when college is a necessity and priority, they want to cut Pell grant funding by 30 percent over 10 years and to reduce overall spending on education and training by 15 percent—a blow to our students. Not for the students whose parents are in that top echelon—there is no problem there. They can afford \$40,000 a year college—\$30,000, \$60,000. It is for our middle class and for those striving to be in the mid-

dle class. They are doomed with this budget.

Now, President Obama has turned this great recession around, but our ranking member points out the problems that remain. The solutions aren't that hard to come by. You make investments—not wasteful spending but investments in energy, investments in transportation, investments in finding cures for diseases. And what do you do? You make this a greater country, and you make lives better across the board.

There are 45 million people who are still recovering from the recession, including 16 million children who live in poverty. The Republicans leave the top echelon alone, who are making billions of dollars, and they are cutting \$660 billion from income security over 10 years. That means they are cutting supplemental nutrition assistance, school lunch, unemployment insurance, earned-income tax credit.

I don't know who they think they represent, but I will tell you who they fight for—the wealthiest of the wealthiest few. That is who they fight for.

That old notion that you give billionaires money and somehow it will trickle down to the rest of us doesn't work. It doesn't work to cut education funding. It doesn't work to cut transportation funding. It doesn't work to cut energy assistance programs.

I have to say that it is a shock to see this budget. If that is why they think they got elected, then the people better pay attention.

Listen to what they do with health care. They do away with the Affordable Care Act, when 16 million people now have insurance who didn't have it before. And guess what; do they have a replacement? They are working on it. Oh, good, we worked on it for 50 years. We finally got it done. It is not perfect, but it is working. In my State it is magnificent to see people who now know they won't lose everything if they get sick. At a time when 70 million Americans rely on Medicaid and children's health coverage, they want to block grant that program and cut it by more than \$1.2 trillion. What will it mean for maternity care when half of all births in the U.S. are financed by Medicaid? This is another blow to our families, to our babies. They fight for your right to be born. How about after you are born? How about after you are born?

At a time when more than 50 million seniors and disabled Americans are on Medicare and the baby boomers continue to age in, they want to cut Medicare by \$430 billion. Now, look, they are afraid to spell out how they want to cut it. They kind of hide it in the documents, but we know what happens. People will be suffering, paying more, getting less care—a blow to our seniors.

They do not close one tax loophole for the wealthiest corporations—some of which pay no income tax—or these billionaires. Now, I have nothing

against being a billionaire at all, but this Congress ought to ask everyone to pay their fair share, including billionaires—not just the middle class.

Now, their gimmicks are unbelievable. They hide defense spending in an off-budget account called OCO. Oh no, OCO—they hide it, but we got their number. I think Al Sharpton says on his show: "We gotcha." We know what you are doing. Where is the emergency fund for our children? Where is the emergency fund for education? Where is the emergency fund for transportation? No, there is no OCO for that, no.

Then they claim they balance the budget. That is the biggest fib ever. Look at their record. When George W. Bush got elected, he had a surplus. It took him 15 minutes to blow it—two wars on the credit card, tax cuts for the rich on the credit card. This budget continues that legacy of shame—shame—hurting our seniors, hurting our children, hurting our middle class, all at the expense of the wealthy few.

We see that President Obama has cut this deficit by more than half. We are on the right track. Let's not walk away from policies that work.

I want to say to the ranking member, Senator SANDERS, I am strongly supporting your amendment on infrastructure, because to be a great Nation we have to move people, we have to move goods. This is a global marketplace. Ships are coming in to California—40 percent of the imports. They are transferred to trucks, and they go on roads that are full of pot holes. They are a mess. They have rail crossings that are dangerous.

So I will conclude in 20 seconds, if I might.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

Mrs. BOXER. I will conclude. I want to thank our ranking member on the Budget Committee because he talks from the heart, the soul, and from facts. If we follow his leadership, rather than the leadership of those on the other side of the aisle who want to go back to the days of high deficits, high unemployment, and chaos—and we were here; we know there was chaos—if not, then vote for this Republican budget. I hope we will vote no, and I hope we will support the amendment that will come forward to put us on the right track again.

Thank you very much. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

If no one yields time, it will be charged equally to both sides.

The Senator from Wyoming.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 349

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment and call up my amendment No. 349.

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

The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Ohio [Mr. PORTMAN], for himself and Mr. BENNET, proposes an amendment numbered 349.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To establish a deficit-neutral reserve fund to improve health outcomes and lower the costs of caring for medically complex children in Medicaid)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO IMPROVE HEALTH OUTCOMES AND LOWER THE COSTS OF CARING FOR MEDICALLY COMPLEX CHILDREN IN MEDICAID.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to improving the health outcomes and lowering the costs of caring for medically complex children in Medicaid, which may include creating or expanding integrated delivery models or improving care coordination, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, we are here talking about the budget. One of the issues on the budget is how we spend our money, including on health care and in this case on some of our most vulnerable young people, our children, who have what are termed to be "complex medical conditions."

I appreciate the fact that Senator BENNET is cosponsoring this amendment with me. It is based on some bipartisan legislation we have been working on over the years that helps to ensure that these children have the opportunity to get better care, and also we can save some funds in what is a very inefficient Medicaid delivery system now for these children.

It would allow, basically, health care providers to deliver health care services to these medically complex kids through models that coordinate care between providers, again helping to improve quality of care—and much better outcomes in the cases where this has been tried—but also to lower costs for Medicaid.

There are roughly 3 million children who fit in this category. It is about 1 in every 25 children. Of these children, by

the way, most of them rely on Medicaid to access care, about 2 million out of the 3 million.

Although children with complex conditions represent only about 6 percent of pediatric Medicaid patients, they comprise about 40 percent of the cost, so 6 percent of the kids, about 40 percent of the cost of all Medicaid spending on children.

Children with these medically complex situations tend to have multiple and high acuity and chronic conditions that often require the service of a lot of different specialists. These circumstances call out for better coordination of care, particularly because a lot of it goes across State lines. Each Medicaid Program in each State has some different rules, but specialized care often requires these children to go to specialized providers outside of their State. This amendment would correct that fragmented system which those kids sometimes encounter now when they do seek that access across State lines.

Not only would the amendment ensure that medically complex children have access to necessary care, it would also allow the Medicaid system to realize savings through these increased efficiencies, including reducing hospitalizations and emergency room visits, while providing the array of outpatient and community services and support that are needed by these children. So it is a more holistic approach to their care, avoiding, frankly, some of the costs associated with emergency room visits and other hospitalizations and other fragmented care. It is based on the experiences in the real world.

There are programs that are doing quite well at improving those outcomes and saving costs. Some of the great children's hospitals have established their track record in developing these care-coordination models for kids with medical complexity. I have seen it in action in Ohio, where we are blessed to have a number of great children's hospitals. I have talked to medical professionals who are very pleased to have this better coordination of care. More importantly, I have talked to the parents and talked to some of the children themselves who are ecstatic about it. You know, many of them received their care through a different process previously that was not coordinated. What they tell me is they are deeply grateful for the coordination, partly because it saves them a lot of time and effort, partly because they are getting much better care, and partly because they just feel as if somebody cares. They are getting the love and support and care they need through the coordination. They are grateful for the difference.

As the overall population of children with medical complexity continues to grow, thanks to some great advances in medical science and medical care, including care for premature babies, we are going to see more and more of this need for better coordination. I want to thank my colleague Senator BENNET

and many others on both sides of the aisle who have been involved in this issue over the years. This is an important amendment for us to have in the Budget Committee because it shows where our heart is as a Senate—to be able to take better care of these kids and also have more efficient care in the Medicaid system, where, again, 6 percent of these children now comprise about 40 percent of the cost in Medicaid for children.

I encourage all of my colleagues to support this commonsense approach to provide better health care outcomes for some of the most vulnerable of our Nation's children.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The Senator from Vermont.

AMENDMENT NO. 386

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment so that I may call up my amendment No. 386.

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

The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS], for himself and Mr. WYDEN, proposes an amendment numbered 386.

Mr. SANDERS. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To establish a deficit-neutral reserve fund to protect Medicaid beneficiaries from benefit cuts)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO PROTECT MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES FROM BENEFIT CUTS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to Medicaid, which may include protecting children, pregnant women, individuals with disabilities, low-income adults, and Americans that need long-term services and supports, including nursing home care, who are guaranteed benefits under Medicaid, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, Senator PORTMAN's amendment touches upon a serious issue that I hope and expect will have broad bipartisan support, and that is the needs of children with serious chronic conditions.

In the United States, over 3 million children have medically complex health conditions. Of those 3 million kids, 2 million rely on Medicaid for their health insurance. That is two out of three kids, which should tell every Member of the Senate how important Medicaid is.

Let me repeat. Two out of three children rely on Medicaid. They have medically complex issues—the issues Senator PORTMAN is speaking about.

Last Congress, Senator NELSON offered a similar amendment during the budget process to address this important issue, and I was pleased to support it. I also plan to support this amendment today and hope that we have widespread bipartisan support for it.

But what I must say is that given that the Republican budget eliminates the Affordable Care Act, which throws 15 million Americans off of health insurance—many of whom have just, for the first time in their lives, received health insurance—and given that the Republican budget cuts Medicaid by some \$400 billion over a 10-year period, the amendment Senator PORTMAN is offering deals with only one tiny and small part of what the Republican budget is doing. What the Republican budget is doing is decimating health care in the United States of America.

Senator PORTMAN says: Well, we have a situation with kids who have medically complex problems.

He is right, but we have many other issues out there that the Republicans are decimating.

Medicaid provides 6.4 million elderly seniors who rely on Medicaid, many of whom are living in nursing homes—6.4 million elderly seniors, some 80 or 90 years of age, rely on Medicaid for their nursing home care. In some cases, these seniors have incomes of \$8,000 to \$9,000 a year. The Portman amendment does not address the devastating cuts that happen to elderly Americans in nursing homes.

Pregnant women who rely on Medicaid for vital prenatal care that improves the health and well-being of mothers and babies—those programs are going to be cut. The Portman amendment does not protect them in any way.

Nearly 33 million children in our country rely on Medicaid for their health insurance. These are kids of low-income, working-class families, and they need important medical care when they are young, such as immunizations and well-child visits. The Portman amendment does not address the fact that many of those people will be thrown off of health insurance.

Some 10 million Americans with disabilities rely on Medicaid to treat serious, sometimes life-threatening disabilities. The Portman amendment does not address what happens to people with disabilities who are on Medicaid.

While I support this amendment, I am also concerned about the devastating impact the Republican budget will have on many millions of Americans by ending the Affordable Care Act—16 million Americans thrown off of health insurance, \$400 billion in cuts in Medicaid, millions more.

I believe we need a budget that strengthens health care in America, not decimates it. I believe we need a

budget that doesn't force us to choose between a seriously ill child and a pregnant woman with small children at home. These are false choices which a great nation such as ours should not be forced to make, especially at a time, as Senator BOXER mentioned, when we have the wealthiest 14 people in this country seeing their wealth increase in the last 2 years by \$157 billion. Our Republican friends say: No, these people should not be asked to pay more in taxes, but we should balance the budget by taking millions of people off of health insurance. I don't think anybody in America thinks those priorities make any sense at all.

I am offering a side-by-side, and in doing so, I urge my colleagues to vote for the Portman amendment but also to vote for my amendment, cosponsored by Senator WYDEN, which supports all Medicaid beneficiaries by opposing cuts to the program.

Let's not sit around saying: Well, we are making some progress in one area, but we don't care about the millions of other people who have been thrown off of Medicaid.

I urge support for the amendment Senator WYDEN and I are offering.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the time until 12 noon today be equally divided between the managers or their designees; that at 12 noon, the Senate vote in relation to the following amendments in the order listed, with no second-degree amendments in order prior to the votes: Sanders No. 323, as modified, Sanders No. 386, and Portman No. 349, with 2 minutes of debate equally divided before each vote; and that following the votes, the Senate recess under the previous order. I further ask that the time from 2:15 p.m. to 3 p.m. be under the control of the minority and that the time from 3 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. be under the control of the majority.

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

Mr. ENZI. For the information of all Senators, there will be three rollcall votes at 12 noon today, with an additional stack of votes expected at 4:30 p.m. today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, despite the repeated statements and warnings from our military and some of our congressional leaders, including myself, we are again staring down the barrel of sequestration.

This has been the great fear we have had, and I think we have come to a compromise here that might be liveable—not ideal, not where we should be, but where we are at this time.

Each service chief and each Secretary—and I have never seen this before—has testified that no service will

be able to meet the wartime requirements under sequestration—that is in the event we have to have sequestration of the military portion.

Let me just mention that it was done wrong from the very beginning. When you talk about sequestration, it would seem to me that we would want to be sequestering or reducing in a relationship or proportion as to what that is of the budget. For example, our military is 16 percent of the budget, and yet we have had to take 50 percent of the cuts. So sequestration has gotten us to this point.

This budget we will be voting on has kind of a temporary solution or relief from sequestration.

Secretary Carter, our new Secretary of Defense, testified that “readiness remains at troubling levels across the force” and “that even with the FY16 budget, the Army, Navy and Marine Corps won't reach their readiness goals until 2020 and the Air Force until 2023.”

This was interesting because we had a hearing where we had faces from the past—Henry Kissinger, George Shultz, and Madeleine Albright. So we had Democrats and Republicans, and they all agreed.

Madeleine Albright testified about her concerns about the deep cuts to the Defense Department, saying that it “jeopardizes America's military reach.” This is a Democrat talking—Madeleine Albright.

Over the last 6 years, significant cuts to the national security spending have forced our men and women in uniform to endure a steep and damaging drop in capabilities and readiness.

All of them testified that our readiness is dropping. When you are talking about readiness, you are talking about risk. When you are talking about risk, you are talking about American lives. Our naval fleet is at a historical low level of ships. The Air Force is the smallest in its history. The Army is shrinking to a force not seen since before World War II.

At a time when our security is being increasingly threatened by terrorism, a rising China, ISIL, ISIS, and rogue nations such as Iran and North Korea, the men and women charged with protecting this Nation are being undermined and forced to endure devastating cuts to the tools they need to keep America safe.

What we are talking about is something that has happened up to this point—not the potential of sequestration, which hopefully we can avoid and I think we will avoid, but what has happened up to this point.

The President believes the world is getting safer. He is negotiating a bad deal with Iran. He thinks global warming is a bigger threat to Americans than terrorism, but top leaders inside and out of the administration disagree.

Director of National Intelligence James Clapper—James Clapper has been in this kind of capacity for well over 40 years—said:

When the final accounting is done, 2014 will have been the most lethal year for global

terrorism in the 45 years such data has been compiled. . . . Roughly half of the world's currently stable countries are at some risk of instability over the next two years.

The Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, Lt. Gen. Vincent Stewart, before our committee just a couple of weeks ago, stated:

A confluence of global, political, military, social, and technological developments, taken in aggregate, have created security challenges more diverse and complex than those we have experienced in our lifetimes.

That was Lt. Gen. Vincent Stuart, the DIA Director.

Over the last three decades, we have built the most powerful fighting force in history and filled it with the most talented men and women ever to wear our uniform. We can't break our promise to them or our responsibility to protect the Nation.

I believe our military—our men and women in uniform—will not accept failure and will do everything they can to succeed no matter how constrained they are by inadequate budgets. However, there will come a point when, without the training, equipment, and force size, it will fail because it was not given the resources to succeed. We cannot let our military get to this point, but that is what we are risking should we have another level of sequestration.

Before sequestration even came into effect, the President cut some \$500 billion from our military. We stood on this floor and talked about it at that time, about how we can't continue having cuts just to the military. That is what happened from this President before sequestration. Because of sequestration for fiscal year 2013, the Army had to cancel seven combat training center rotations, deferred maintenance on aircraft and vehicles, and postponed reset of weapons and equipment. The Air Force stood down 17 combat squadrons, cut 40,000 flying hours for its remaining units, cut training, and deferred maintenance activities.

This is a problem that we have, too, because we have to consider the difference between retraining and retaining in the Air Force. The pilots—to train a pilot to F-22 standards costs in excess of \$9 million, while retentions are something like \$200,000 over a 9- or 10-year period.

Because of the sequestration in 2013, the Navy and Marine Corps canceled deployments, deferred maintenance on ships, aircraft, and vehicles, reduced purchases of spare parts, and reduced training activities. All the services had to cut or delay weapon system and infrastructure modernization.

Modernization is one of the first things they do when they cut. They really can't do the readiness, they can't cut the personnel who are out there, the force strength, so modernization is what suffers because that is not something people are aware of today. Yet that is where the cuts were. They are still attempting to recover from all of these cuts.

But recent budget turmoil has forced our generals and admirals to worry

about our military's ability to fulfill its critical national security role in, arguably, the most dangerous time in our Nation's history.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—that is General Dempsey—warned that continued national security cuts will “severely limit our ability to implement our defense strategy.” He means there the defense strategy to defend our country and to save lives out there. “It will put the nation at greater risk of coercion, and it will break faith with men and women in uniform.” That is General Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Our Nation relies on less than 1 percent who volunteer to risk their lives on its behalf. I was trying to get a comparable figure to put that in perspective, but we are talking about 1 percent of our population is involved in protecting the other 99 percent. When these brave men and women are ordered into harm's way, they will salute with courage, they will go and do their job, their mission, and very effectively, but they do not have the right equipment to do it with. In return, they rightfully expect a supportive nation to provide them with the best training, technology, and equipment to accomplish their mission and then to come home safely. Tragically, we are not doing that.

Put simply, top military leaders are telling us that continued cuts to national security spending are making this country less safe. These cuts are making it more likely that our military men and women will not return from the battlefield alive, and this is immoral.

We must increase our defense budget, and I prefer to increase its base budget in fiscal year 2016 and over the next 5 years to give our military leadership the required and predictable funding they need. Because of Senate rules, however, we aren't able to do this without changing the law. I am committed to working to the point where we can replace sequestration with cuts to mandatory spending, as was originally planned with the Budget Control Act.

We went through the Budget Control Act assuming some of these things would happen. For the purposes of a Senate budget resolution, however, I am proud of the Budget Committee and the hard work they have done for adopting an amendment during their markup to provide additional funding for the Department of Defense through overseas contingency operations. That is OCO. This is far from ideal. OCO money is better than no money at all, and until we provide the solution to sequestration we need, this is the best we can do.

Our country is at war and will be for the foreseeable future and we are going to have to do something to keep America strong. I don't like this alternative. We have had nothing but a series of bad alternatives and this is the least bad alternative. So I salute Senator ENZI and others who are responsible for

coming up with something that still is going to defend our Nation, particularly as we are faced with another potential round of sequestration. We can't let that happen to our men and women in uniform nor to America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. INHOFE. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that even though we had an agreement for time to be equally divided—yesterday, we passed one that said whenever we are in a quorum call, the time would be equally divided—I hope that would continue through all these quorum calls, and so I ask unanimous consent that be the case.

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

Mr. ENZI. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, first of all, I want to thank my good friend from Vermont for drawing attention to the critical importance of passing a long-term Transportation reauthorization bill. This is one that Senator BOXER and I have been working together on for a long period of time. We have gone through these reauthorizations for many years, and we know this is the way to do it.

The reauthorization bill is far superior to just the short-term efforts for extensions. I think we all realize extensions cost about 30 percent off the top. And while I can't support the specific proposal of my good friend from Vermont, passing a bipartisan long-term fully funded bill is my top priority as chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee.

As we all know, the current Transportation reauthorization expires on May 31, and EPW will be prepared to move on a reauthorization bill before that deadline. That is our goal. My staff has been working closely with the staff of my good friend and partner from California, the ranking member, Senator BOXER, and we are getting close to having our bill ready.

I know my colleagues on the Committees on Finance, Commerce, Science and Transportation, and Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs are also

committed to passing a long-term bill as soon as possible, because this does involve not just the Environment and Public Works Committee but the other two committees as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I want to thank my colleague and friend from Oklahoma, and I also want to thank the ranking member of the Committee on Finance for being here because he is so right, we have to work together. On the EPW Committee, we know how critical this is. The Committee on Finance knows how critical it is because they have to figure out the pay-fors—let's be honest, the hardest part of all this—and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation also has to work. I am sure Senator THUNE is very aware of that, and his ranking member as well.

MAP 21, our transportation bill, is set to expire as the summer construction season is beginning. Several States—Arkansas, Georgia, Wyoming, and Tennessee—have already delayed or canceled construction projects due to the uncertainty in the Federal transportation funding system. Other States are considering similar actions as the construction season fast approaches.

I want to make this point. We are going to hear from all of our States. I am fortunate, I have such a large State they can go a little longer with the uncertainty, but even California, which receives quite a bit from the highway trust fund, is going to start to hurt pretty soon.

I am so proud that my friend, my chairman, is here, because we have such a great history of working together on infrastructure projects—not so good on the environment; we go toe to toe and don't work together on that, but we work together on infrastructure. He talks about it as a proud conservative and I talk about it as a proud liberal, and we see why it is so critical for our Nation.

So we do have to work carefully to craft another bipartisan MAC-21, and I look forward to bringing that bill to the floor.

I want to make sure that when we do bring that bill to the floor we have no controversial riders on it to bring it to a dead stop. We have seen that on so many bills already. I am really looking forward to bringing such a bill that is a clean bill that addresses our transportation funding to the floor with Chairman INHOFE, with the support of Chairman HATCH and Ranking Member WYDEN and others.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, let me say I agree and look forward to that.

Sometimes people forget some of the things we are supposed to be doing around here. The Constitution says roads and bridges. That is what we are supposed to be doing. So I will work closely with my friend from California to achieve this.

Mrs. BOXER. I thank the Senator.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, the Senate is going to spend much of this week debating the contours and the details of the Federal budget. Our colleagues are going to offer a variety of amendments, and we will undoubtedly cast a lot of votes. Those watching are going to hear speeches that are peppered with numbers and statistics. So I would like to start out the debate by setting aside, to the extent we can, this flood of numbers and statistics, and focus on what this means to working families in my home State of Oregon and across the country.

My view is the great economic challenge of our time is expanding opportunity for these families. It is about strengthening the middle class and adding sturdier rungs to America's economic ladder so everybody has the chance to climb upward.

Seven years after a crippling economic collapse, we have seen our unemployment rate go down, home foreclosures have gone down, gas prices have gone down. We are finally starting to see wages beginning to grow, and manufacturing is picking up steam. The American economy is now performing better than at any recent time in memory.

But the fact is there are still millions of Americans who feel stuck. They listen to all of the positive economic news that ricochets across the news media and wonder when things are actually going to get better for them and their families. I hear it firsthand in every townhall meeting I hold in our State, including several this month. These are young parents who are overwhelmed by the cost of childcare. There are students practically in shock over the sticker price of a college education. We have workers who are nearing retirement age, confirmed by the Finance Committee, who have hardly been able to save at all.

What the Senate budget is all about is not just facts and figures but about the hopes and aspirations of those people I have described who want things to change. In my view, the budget the Congress sets should take on those middle-class challenges directly. It ought to help working-class families and give more Americans a chance to get ahead in life.

This week, our colleagues on the other side of the aisle are putting forward a different kind of budget—a budget that would poke some new holes in the safety net and, in my view, would worsen inequality. We would see millions of Americans face cuts in programs that are a lifeline for them. I have to ask, How will cutting a Pell grant and education tax credits help a disadvantaged student in La Grande, OR, who wants to work hard, play by the rules, and get ahead? How is cutting food stamps going to help a single mother in Ashland who is walking on

an economic tightrope every month? How is it going to help her keep food on the table? How will slashing Medicaid help a struggling family in Roseburg, OR, stay healthy and out of the emergency room? And, finally, how would repealing the Affordable Care Act help a cancer survivor in Corvallis who has finally been able to get health insurance for the first time in years?

So my bottom line is pretty direct: Our middle class declines with every rung that is pulled from the ladder of opportunity. So what we all ought to say is the budget is about trying to help Americans climb upward with a budget that is designed to give all Americans the opportunity to get ahead.

To me, we start by investing in America's infrastructure. We simply cannot have big league economic growth with a little league infrastructure. The roads and highways in Oregon and across our country are now pocked by ruts and potholes, making it harder to do business and harder to travel. Dozens of people have been killed or injured in bridge collapses. Without adequate roads, bridges, and transit, drivers spend far too much time sitting in traffic choking on exhaust.

This also has taken a big toll on America's ability to compete internationally. We have to have big league infrastructure to draw jobs and investment to our country, and that depends on the quality of our roads and ports and airports and railways. We know investing in infrastructure creates thousands of jobs in America right away and supports millions more over the long term.

In my view, effective, targeted investments in infrastructure ought to be a no-brainer on both sides of the aisle.

Second, the Congress ought to strengthen programs that assist rural communities and brighten their economic futures. For example, homes in Oregon and across the West are being threatened by fires that are growing bigger and hotter and more damaging each year.

Chairman ENZI's budget took several steps in the right direction to improve the way governments budget for fires, but with a growing threat, more resources are needed to fight and prevent fires. Having just visited Medford, OR, they told me it was going to be the driest in 25 years, and we take out a map and California just looks dry, dry, dry. Passing the bipartisan legislation that Senator CRAPO and I have authored is urgent.

I also feel funding for agricultural research is another vital tool for giving rural communities a chance to get ahead. Each dollar that goes into agricultural research will be far outstripped by the value created in crops and croplands.

I was told just recently by wheat farmers in Eastern Oregon that investing in agricultural research is going to

give them and people all through Eastern Oregon a better chance to get ahead and be more successful with their farms.

I want to make mention of the important low-income and middle-class tax challenge. We ought to make the tax cuts for middle-class and low-income Americans permanent. There is a very big tax looming in 2018, unless the Congress moves to prevent it. Millions of families in Oregon and across the Nation depend on the expansion of the earned-income tax credit, the child tax credit, and the American opportunity tax credit. These are all set to expire, and the longer families sit in the dark wondering what their tax obligations will be, the harder it is for these families—already struggling to get ahead—for them to predict how to budget. In my view, it would be legislative malpractice to leave these low-income and middle-class tax cuts teetering on a cliff while others are permanently enshrined into the law. Furthermore, taking that uncertainty off the table is going to make comprehensive tax reform easier to accomplish.

My colleagues and I on the Finance Committee are working hard to bring our broken Tax Code into the 21st century. I have worked for more than a decade, first with our former colleague Senator Gregg and most recently with our current colleague Senator COATS, to produce the first bipartisan Federal income tax reform plan in more than a quarter century. So I know it is possible to make the Tax Code simpler and fairer. It ought to give everybody the chance to climb the economic ladder, and making the critical low-income and middle-class tax cuts permanent is a big step in that direction.

Next, I think the question of college affordability and doing more to help students get to graduation day ought to be a focus of this budget. The skyrocketing price of tuition keeps far too many young people from enrolling in college, and it keeps too many others from completing it. In effect, the price of college can reinforce inequality. Millions of students are buried up to their eyeballs in debt before they ever put on that cap and gown.

It is time to come at this challenge from every angle. For one, it is important to make student debt more manageable so graduates don't spend decades weighed down by loan payments. It is absolutely essential to help students take on less debt from the start. That will get more students in the door to challenge and free graduates from a lifetime of debt. That is why, in my view, cutting the Pell grant is the wrong way to go, and the Byzantine web of tax incentives for higher education needs to be cleaned up as well. It should not take dozens of calculations and hours of time for students to navigate the Byzantine tax rules. It should be simpler and easier so more students see a more meaningful benefit. Some student loan debt may be unavoidable, but leaving students with less debt is possible.

My next concern with respect to the budget is making sure needless cuts are made in essential health care programs. The cuts to Medicaid, in my view, that have been proposed by the other side are a guaranteed formula to make life harder for struggling families.

Just contemplate—and having been to Iowa, I know of the many seniors in Iowa—seniors who rely on Medicaid to cover the cost of nursing home care. That is, to a great extent, what the Medicaid budget is all about. Medicaid for those frail seniors—whether it is Oregon or Vermont or Iowa, Medicaid is what keeps a lot of those frail seniors from falling into absolute destitution. In another era, impoverished seniors might have been thrown into almshouses or poor farms. Today, Medicaid is a lifeline for tens of millions. But the budget proposal we have seen from the other side, in my view, would inflict substantial cuts on Medicaid, endanger our future. I don't believe that is the right course for frail seniors who rely on Medicaid for nursing home care.

The last point I would make deals with the effects of repealing the Affordable Care Act. If we repeal the Affordable Care Act, make no mistake about it, America goes back to the days when health care is for the healthy and the wealthy because no longer will we have protections for people with preexisting conditions. It is fine if you are healthy and it is fine if you are wealthy, but that is not most Americans. There are plenty of ways to improve the Affordable Care Act in a bipartisan fashion. That is not what the budget from the other side does. I hope we will not go back to the days in America when health care is for the healthy and wealthy, which is the bottom-line consequence of full repeal.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

AMENDMENT NO. 323, AS MODIFIED

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, first I wish to thank Senator WYDEN for his remarks. I concur with what he said, and I thank him for cosponsoring the amendment on infrastructure that we will be voting on in a few minutes.

Senator WYDEN and I understand that you cannot be a great nation if your roads and bridges, water systems, wastewater plants, airports, levees, dams, and railroad system are crumbling. That is not what a great nation is about.

Years ago, the United States used to be the envy of the world in terms of infrastructure. Countries all over the world looked to the United States and asked: How do you do it? How do you provide clean water to your people? How do you have such an efficient transportation system? How do you have such great roads?

That is no longer the case. Today we are in 12th place, and I don't think any of my Republican colleagues would deny that. In fact, our infrastructure is

crumbling. We have to address this issue. We cannot kick the can down the road. We can't say: Well, let's wait a few years until we come up with some magic funding formula.

We have to do it, and we have to do it now. The reason we have to do it now is that every year we delay, the problem only becomes worse. We are spending billions of dollars just to maintain the status quo, patching up a deteriorating system—whether it is transit, rails, roads or bridges. We have to rebuild our crumbling infrastructure. There is no disagreement, I believe, in the Senate on that.

Second of all, I hope there is no disagreement that unemployment in this country is much too high. Real unemployment is at 11 percent, counting those who have given up looking for work and those who are working part-time. Youth unemployment is 17 percent, and African-American youth unemployment is higher than that. We need a major jobs program to put millions of people back to work at decent wages, and that is what rebuilding our infrastructure does.

The economists tell us that if we want to create jobs, the fastest way to create jobs in America is to rebuild our roads, bridges, and rail system. That is the fastest way to do it. Many of my Republican colleagues probably understand that as well. Where we disagree is how we fund the front.

Some on the Republican side will say: Well, we are looking at tax reform, and we are looking at this and looking at that, and maybe it will happen, but maybe it will not happen. We certainly have not had a lot of luck on these issues in recent years. Our Republican friends are not particularly interested in investments in America. Their idea of dealing with the deficit is to cut, cut, cut.

What we are proposing here is a \$478 billion infrastructure package for 6 years, and it is funded by something I hope all of us can agree is unacceptable, and that is that at a time when corporate profits are at an all-time high, many corporations are stashing their profits in the Cayman Islands, Bermuda, Luxembourg, tax havens around the world. Guess what they are paying in American income tax to the United States Government. Zero.

We eliminate those loopholes. We raise substantial sums of money. We put that money into rebuilding our infrastructure, creating jobs, and making our country more efficient, safer, and more productive. That is what happens when you have a strong infrastructure.

I ask that Americans try to imagine what America will look like when we have some 9 million workers. This proposal would create some 9 million good-paying jobs in all of our States. People would be working to improve our roads and our water systems, and we can try to begin to compete effectively with the rail systems of other countries throughout the world. Think of what America will look like when we

become and develop a first-rate infrastructure, not a third-rate infrastructure. I know people think this is a lot of money, but it is nowhere near what the American Society of Civil Engineers is telling us that we need.

If you are interested in creating a 21st century infrastructure, please vote for my amendment. If you are interested in creating and maintaining some 9 million jobs over a 6-year period, please vote for my amendment. If you are interested in ending an outrageous corporate loophole, which in some cases enables large, profitable multinational corporations to pay zero in Federal income tax, please vote for this amendment. It will send a powerful message that now is the time to rebuild our crumbling infrastructure and put our people to work and end absurd loopholes.

With that, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I will be very brief. My colleague has expressed his thoughts on this issue well, and we have had a number of discussions on infrastructure with the distinguished chairman of the committee.

I come back to the fact that all Americans have a stake in this amendment—whether you are a commuter, whether you are an exporter, whether you are someone who lives in rural Wyoming or rural Oregon.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democrats' time has expired.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent for 1 more minute.

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

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I will be very brief. I thank my colleagues for their courtesy.

This amendment is about more than bumpy roads, popped tires, and broken axles. It is about jobs and economic growth in every nook and cranny in our country, and the key to that growth is infrastructure. Attracting investment depends on the condition of our infrastructure. Suffice it to say that our competitors in a tough global marketplace are increasing their investments in infrastructure. It is time to adopt this amendment and for us to do the same.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, I get a little upset when I hear one side say that the other side doesn't care about infrastructure. That is not true. We even had a colloquy just a little while ago where the two sides said we need infrastructure. I agree that we need infrastructure, but I will oppose this amendment because it is telling the tax committee exactly what to do to provide infrastructure. One committee is getting into another committee's jurisdiction to say exactly how to do it, and that is not right. That is not the way we handle legislation around here.

Senator WYDEN is on the tax committee. He is the ranking member on that committee. Senator HATCH is the chairman of that committee. They are both concerned about infrastructure. There is already a provision in the bill that allows for the money to be put into place to do it, but that provision does not tell the Finance Committee that it must plug a certain tax loophole and put it into infrastructure. The committee can do that, and the President's budget—one of the reasons there is some excitement here—on money that is held overseas by companies, puts a mandatory 14 percent tax on that and expects it to be brought back right away to fund these things. That is a proposal that has been in the tax committee before—but not at 14 percent. It has been at a lower rate. Fourteen percent is more money than both the highway committee and the defense committee are talking about. We cannot produce a budget in which we tell committees exactly how to do their work. We need to build in the flexibility so they can do their job.

The chairman of the committee is convinced that we can do the job of fixing our infrastructure. Of course, we will never fix the infrastructure as well as we would like to have it fixed. I think the ranking member on the Budget Committee mentioned that we have four times as much need as what his proposal addresses. He has a proposal for \$468 billion. There is a couple trillion dollars' worth of need out there. Of course, we hope we can get a lot of people involved in fixing these problems. It is not just a Federal problem. It is a local and State problem as well. We hope everybody will participate so that we can improve the infrastructure. It does put people to work, just as Keystone would put people to work.

I ask that my colleagues vote against the bill because we are telling one committee exactly where to get the money for another committee.

I yield the floor and reserve the remainder of my time.

Madam President, I yield the balance of our time for the Senator from Oklahoma.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, in a few minutes we will be voting, and while I sincerely appreciate the effort of my good friend Senator SANDERS, I will be opposing this approach mostly because I don't think we need to go through what I consider to be a massive tax increase in order to do this. But just for a moment, I wish to talk about the seriousness of the transportation reauthorization bill. I know this issue has been talked about during the budget conversation and debate, but I think sometimes we ought to drag up that old document that hardly anyone pays attention to anymore—the Constitution.

The Constitution specifically says in article I, section 8 that there are some

things we are supposed to be doing here. The two major things that are mentioned in the article I, section 8 are, No. 1, defending America—that is our military—and the other is roads and bridges.

I think we are concentrating and working very hard. A minute ago I had a colloquy with my friend from California, Senator BOXER. Senator BOXER observed that she is a proud liberal and recognized me as a proud conservative. Yet here is something we agree on, something we can do, something that is very important and that we need to take care of.

Now, I won't say anything about the defense problem. We have a serious problem in our defense system right now, but that is not the discussion for today. I do believe that while we have an amendment that would address a highway reauthorization bill—and how critical that is—we are working on that.

I have to remind people that there is a reserve fund in Chairman ENZI's budget that serves as a placeholder for Chairman HATCH to address a long-term highway bill later this year.

The last bill we had was a 27-month bill. Again, that was to setup this idea of having a long-term bill. The last good bill we had was in 2005, and that was a 5-year bill. It was really produced very well. The problem with extensions—and I think we all know this—is that extensions take about 30 percent off the top because short-term extensions—and anyone who has been in business knows this—are things you cannot do in the short term. You cannot get the streamlining. Our 27-month bill had a lot of really good streamlining provisions in there. You cannot do that on short-term extensions.

I look forward to having a very large bill. We have a deadline at the end of May to make this a reality, and I believe we are going to be able to do that. We are meeting on a regular basis, including a meeting today with Senator HATCH. We will be coming up with ways that we can pay for this.

Again, I can remember in the very beginning we used to have a problem in the highway trust fund because we had too much surplus. Well, it is not that way anymore. We all know how we got in the mess we are in right now. We will have to address that, and I look forward to doing that and providing some of the leadership, right along with Senator BOXER and Senator SANDERS, in making this a reality.

With that, noting that 12 noon is here, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I wish to thank Senator INHOFE for his remarks on infrastructure. I hope we can all work together for what I would suspect every Member here sees as a serious problem.

But this amendment says let's not kick the can down the road. Our infrastructure is crumbling. We used to be the envy of the world; today we are in 12th place. This impacts not just people who are driving cars, it impacts every business in America. We need now to start the process of rebuilding our roads and bridges and dams and levees and airports. When we do that, this amendment, over a 6-year period, can create and maintain 9 million jobs—9 million jobs—at a time when we need decent-paying jobs.

I understand the difference of opinion stems from how we get the funding for this. Our approach is pretty simple. It eliminates an outrageous loophole that allows large, profitable corporations to stash their money around the world and, in some cases, pay zero in Federal income taxes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. SANDERS. I ask for support for this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be recognized for 1 minute in opposition.

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

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, as I said a few minutes ago, I agree with Senator SANDERS, the author of this amendment, in terms of what is the problem we have. We have to have a transportation reauthorization bill and we are going to have it.

I know Senator SANDERS has characterized his bill as being paid for by closing tax loopholes, but I would still say that, in my opinion and my analysis of this, this would equate to nearly a half a trillion dollar tax increase, and this is not the way I want to have a transportation reauthorization bill.

Let me remind my colleagues that there is a reserve fund in Chairman ENZI's budget that serves as a placeholder for Chairman HATCH to address a long-term highway bill later this year. We have a deadline of May 31, and I think we can meet that deadline. We are working with Senator HATCH right now to come up with that plan.

So I urge my colleagues to vote against the Sanders amendment and pursue our bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the votes following the first vote in the series be 10 minutes in length.

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

Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to amendment No. 323, as modified, offered by the Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 45, nays 52, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 78 Leg.]

YEAS—45

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Nelson
Bennet	Heinrich	Peters
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Reed
Booker	Hirono	Reid
Boxer	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	King	Schatz
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Leahy	Shaheen
Carper	Markey	Stabenow
Casey	McCaskill	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Udall
Donnelly	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Mikulski	Warren
Feinstein	Murphy	Whitehouse
Franken	Murray	Wyden

NAYS—52

Alexander	Fischer	Perdue
Ayotte	Flake	Portman
Barrasso	Gardner	Risch
Blunt	Graham	Roberts
Boozman	Grassley	Rounds
Burr	Hatch	Rubio
Capito	Heller	Sasse
Cassidy	Hoeven	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Cochran	Isakson	Shelby
Collins	Johnson	Sullivan
Corker	Lankford	Thune
Cornyn	Lee	Tillis
Cotton	McCain	Toomey
Crapo	McConnell	Vitter
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Enzi	Murkowski	
Ernst	Paul	

NOT VOTING—3

Cruz	Kirk	Manchin
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The amendment (No. 323), as modified, was rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 386

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to amendment No. 386, offered by the Senator from Vermont, Mr. SANDERS.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, Senator PORTMAN's amendment touches on a very serious issue that I believe has broad bipartisan support, the need to deal with children who have serious, chronic conditions. In fact, over 3 million kids in this country have medically complex health conditions.

Senator PORTMAN appropriately is calling attention to that issue. I support him. But when you look at the overall Republican budget, it throws 16 million people off of health insurance by ending the Affordable Care Act and millions more through a \$400 billion cut in Medicaid. What happens to a

pregnant woman on Medicaid who needs prenatal care? No health insurance for her. What about a kid who was in an automobile accident whose family has no health insurance and is thrown off of Medicaid? No health insurance for that kid. What about an elderly person in a nursing home? There are millions of elderly people on Medicaid in nursing homes.

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

Mr. SANDERS. Please support this amendment. No cuts to Medicaid for all our kids.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments and support for the Portman amendment. I want you to know I support the Sanders amendment. We support pregnant women and kids who are hurt in car accidents or face other unfortunate circumstances.

So we would be happy to take this by voice vote.

Mr. SANDERS. I think it would be better to do a rollcall vote. We appreciate your support.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to the Sanders amendment.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 94, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 79 Leg.]

YEAS—94

Alexander	Enzi	Mikulski
Ayotte	Ernst	Moran
Baldwin	Feinstein	Murkowski
Barrasso	Fischer	Murphy
Bennet	Franken	Murray
Blumenthal	Gardner	Nelson
Blunt	Gillibrand	Paul
Booker	Graham	Perdue
Boozman	Grassley	Peters
Boxer	Hatch	Portman
Brown	Heinrich	Reed
Burr	Heitkamp	Reid
Cantwell	Heller	Risch
Capito	Hirono	Roberts
Cardin	Hoeven	Rounds
Carper	Inhofe	Rubio
Casey	Isakson	Sanders
Cassidy	Johnson	Sasse
Coats	Kaine	Schatz
Cochran	King	Schumer
Collins	Klobuchar	Scott
Coons	Lankford	Shaheen
Corker	Leahy	Shelby
Cornyn	Markey	Stabenow
Cotton	McCain	Sullivan
Crapo	McCaskill	Tester
Daines	McConnell	Thune
Donnelly	Menendez	Tillis
Durbin	Merkley	Toomey

Udall Warren Wyden
 Vitter Whitehouse
 Warner Wicker

NAYS—3

Flake Lee Sessions

NOT VOTING—3

Cruz Kirk Manchin

The amendment (No. 386) was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 349

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to amendment No. 349, offered by the Senator from Ohio, Mr. PORTMAN.

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, this is a very simple amendment. It is a deficit-neutral reserve fund to help the most vulnerable kids among us to have better coordinated care under Medicaid.

It allows health care providers to deliver health care services to medically complex kids through models that coordinate care between providers, resulting in better care but also lower costs, including helping with regard to a problem, including across State lines.

These children with complex medical conditions make up about 6 percent of the children who get health care under Medicaid, but it is about 40 percent of the cost of pediatric care under Medicare and Medicaid.

This is an opportunity for us on a bipartisan basis, I know, to be able to help these kids to get the necessary care they need and actually allow the Medicaid system to realize some savings through efficiencies, such as reduced emergency room stays, hospitalizations, and other procedures.

I thank my colleague Senator BENNET, who will speak in a second on his cosponsorship.

I urge all my colleagues to support this commonsense measure to help these vulnerable kids.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I also rise to speak in favor of the Portman amendment. This amendment is based on a bill I introduced earlier this year called the ACE Kids Act that recognizes the critical importance of Medicaid to children with severe medical conditions. It highlights the need for greater coordination and integration of care across the country for 2 million children.

Earlier this month, I met with Everett Ediger at Children's Hospital of Colorado in Denver. Everett is 8 years old and has spina bifida, a neurological disorder of the spine. It took his mom Maureen 2 years to get him signed up under Medicaid and to establish a system to coordinate all of his care.

While Everett was beating me at air hockey, he let his mom explain to me about the frustrating experience of trying to coordinate all of her son's specialists and the payments for his care.

We need to focus on children such as Everett all across this country.

I thank my colleague Senator PORTMAN for his leadership in offering this amendment.

I urge my colleagues to vote yes.

Mr. ENZI. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the Portman amendment.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 96, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 80 Leg.]

YEAS—96

Alexander	Fischer	Murray
Ayotte	Flake	Nelson
Baldwin	Franken	Paul
Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Bennet	Gillibrand	Peters
Blumenthal	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Reed
Booker	Hatch	Risch
Boozman	Heinrich	Roberts
Boxer	Heitkamp	Rounds
Brown	Heller	Rubio
Burr	Hirono	Sanders
Cantwell	Hoeven	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Schatz
Cardin	Isakson	Schumer
Carper	Johnson	Scott
Casey	Kaine	Sessions
Cassidy	King	Shaheen
Coats	Klobuchar	Shelby
Cochran	Lankford	Stabenow
Collins	Leahy	Sullivan
Coons	Lee	Tester
Corker	Markey	Thune
Cornyn	McCain	Tillis
Cotton	McCaskill	Toomey
Crapo	McConnell	Udall
Daines	Menendez	Vitter
Donnelly	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Mikulski	Warren
Enzi	Moran	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murkowski	Wicker
Feinstein	Murphy	Wyden

NOT VOTING—4

Cruz Manchin
 Kirk Reid

The amendment (No. 349) was agreed to.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:15 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. FISCHER).

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 2016—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 3

p.m. will be controlled by the Democrats and the time from 3 p.m. until 3:45 p.m. will be controlled by the majority.

The Senator from Maryland.

AMENDMENT NO. 362

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I call up my amendment No. 362.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Maryland [Ms. MIKULSKI], for herself, Mr. WYDEN, and Ms. STABENOW, proposes an amendment numbered 362.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To establish a deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to amending the Equal Pay Act of 1963 to allow for punitive damages, limit the any factor "other than sex" exception, and prohibit retaliation against employees who share salary information)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to efforts to ensure equal pay policies and practices and to reform section 6(d) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(d)) (commonly known as the "Equal Pay Act of 1963") to allow for punitive damages, limit the exception for unequal pay described in paragraph (1) of such section to business necessity rather than any factor "other than sex", and prevent retaliation against employees for sharing salary information by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, my amendment is about paycheck fairness, a topic I know the Presiding Officer, the Senator from Nebraska, is absolutely familiar with. I come to the floor to finish the job we began with Lilly Ledbetter to end pay discrimination in the workplace once and for all. That is why I am offering this amendment, which is based on the bill I have offered in the past three Congresses. It is called the Paycheck Fairness Act.

My Senate colleagues and I want to be sure women get a raise. The way we want to do that is to put more money in the family checkbook by putting change in the Federal law book.

My amendment will do three things.

No. 1, it will stop retaliation in the workplace for sharing pay information. For years, the famous Lilly Ledbetter was harassed and humiliated just for asking questions about her coworkers' salaries. In many workplaces around the country, you are forbidden to discuss shared pay information even if