

During my time in the U.S. Senate, I have sponsored and supported legislation to help our Nation's veterans. I strongly believe that treatment and rehabilitation of our Nation's veterans should be among our highest priorities. These games offer our Nation's veterans an opportunity to overcome adversity and work towards rehabilitation. As such the games deserve our support and attention.

It is with great pride that I offer this resolution to recognize the contribution that this event makes towards improving the lives of disabled veterans and commend the organizers and volunteers of this event. I thank Senator TOOMEY for joining me in sponsoring this and I urge all of my colleagues to join me in support of this resolution.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I further ask that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 246) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 246

Whereas the National Veterans Wheelchair Games are a multi-event sports and rehabilitation program for veterans who use wheelchairs for sports competition due to spinal cord injuries, amputations, or neurological problems;

Whereas the National Veterans Wheelchair Games is the largest annual wheelchair sporting event in the world, attracting roughly 600 athletes annually;

Whereas in 2011, the National Veterans Wheelchair Games will be held August 1 through August 6, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania;

Whereas competitive events at the National Veterans Wheelchair Games include table tennis, archery, swimming, quad rugby, weightlifting, air guns, nine-ball, basketball, softball, bowling, handcycling, power soccer, trapshooting, Super "6" slalom, a motorized wheelchair rally, and track and field events;

Whereas the National Veterans Wheelchair Games provide veterans with disabilities the opportunity to enhance their quality of life and promote better health through sports competition; and

Whereas past National Veterans Wheelchair Games have produced national and world-class champions and given newly disabled veterans, including veterans who have served in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, a chance to participate in events with other wheelchair athletes and to continue to use their athletic skills in competition: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the significant contribution that the National Veterans Wheelchair Games make to the lives of disabled veterans who have selflessly served the United States; and

(2) commends the organizers and volunteers of and the participants in the 2011 National Veterans Wheelchair Games for their efforts in service of the United States.

ESTABLISHING THE COMMISSION ON FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT PROCESSING DELAYS—Continued

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I want to say that I listened very carefully to the remarks of the senior Senator from Maryland about where we find ourselves. I want to associate myself with her remarks on what a dire situation we are in at this moment. We really stand tonight on the edge of an economic calamity. Why is that? America is at the brink of being unable to pay our bills, bills we already voted to pay way in the past. When you raise the debt ceiling, it is not about future spending, it is about meeting your obligations.

How did we get to this debt? How did we get to this debt? For many years, we ran deficits, and they added up.

But I remember that when Bill Clinton was President—Madam President, I know you remember this—we balanced the budget. We didn't have a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution; we balanced the budget by sitting down and figuring out what was wasteful spending, what were important investments. We had economic growth, 23 million new jobs, and all the revenues that came with them. We had surpluses.

When George W. Bush became President, he said about this surplus: I have to give this back to the people. And he gave it back to the millionaires and the billionaires. He put two wars on the credit card. Poof—there went the surplus. Then he had a prescription drug benefit, but he didn't pay for it, and there went the surplus. Two wars on the credit card, prescription drug benefit on the credit card, and tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires on the credit card, and all of a sudden, we started to see the debt rise.

My Republican friends who have suddenly discovered this debt never said a word when George Bush was President and we raised the debt ceiling nine times. Did you see the Democrats out here on the floor threatening to hold up the whole country? Did you see the Democrats saying: We won't give George Bush an increase in the debt ceiling unless he does whatever we want. We didn't do that. We should not ever do that. That is what is going on here. Republicans, led by the far extreme of their party, are holding this country hostage, and they are saying that unless they get their way, they will not relent.

I pray and I hope—and I am talking to my Republican friends in these hours—we will be able to come to some agreement. But I will say this: We are now facing a filibuster by my Republican friends. They will not allow us to vote on the Reid amendment with just a majority vote. They are demanding a supermajority. What I find interesting is they did not demand a supermajority vote over in the House on the Boehner proposal. That was done by a simple majority. Now they say we need a

supermajority to vote on the Reid proposal.

HARRY REID has his door wide open; you know that as well as I. He has invited MITCH MCCONNELL—all the Republicans: Come on in. I am here. I am ready to negotiate. What is it that you need?

So far, we know there are conversations going on among Members. We do not see that leadership coming from Leader MCCONNELL. I hope he is rethinking this because the whole world is watching. They see a filibuster tonight. They understand which side is trying to resolve it.

How did we really get here? I explained how we got to the debt. How did we get to this moment? The debt ceiling needed to be raised, and our Republican friends said to our President: We are not going to give you a clean debt ceiling increase. We want to sit down and work on some cuts to the budget.

Guess what. The President said: I don't know, but we will do it. Come on in, we will do it.

Then the President said: You know what. Let's get a really big deal. Let's get a \$4 trillion deal. Let's get out of this budgetary crisis.

The President gave and gave, and what was the reward? First ERIC CANTOR stalked out of the talks. He stalked out. "I don't want to be part of this." He took his little blanky and went home.

Then JOHN BOEHNER—he is in the talks, and he walks out of the talks not once but twice. He said: Well, I am done with this. I am going to work with the people on Capitol Hill. I am going to go talk to the bipartisan leadership here.

We said: Fine. We will try to work with you.

But they want everything their way: My way or the highway. If you ever looked up what "compromise" means, it means everybody gives a little.

We didn't want to attach this to the debt ceiling increase, but we said: OK, we will do it. You feel strongly about it. We will do it.

They said: OK. We don't want any new revenues.

They don't want to touch millionaires and billionaires. God forbid they should pay \$5 more a year to help us.

We said: You know what, we think it is wrong, but if that is what you are saying, we will just do cuts.

That was not happy. HARRY REID did more cuts than the Republicans—twice as many. That still was not good enough for them. It is always more of what they want.

I raised a family, and I know sometimes it is tough. This is the American family. If you have an argument between two kids in your family—I had two children. Now I have four grandchildren. They argue, and you have to say: Let's listen to each other first. I will give up something, and you give up something. Let's meet in the middle.

Oh, no. Then you think: Wait a minute, why do they think they deserve every single thing they want?

What are they thinking? Do they run the Senate? No. The Democrats do.

Madam President, you and I just won reelection. You are the longest serving woman ever in this Senate. I am so proud to know you. You have had some hard races in your life. I had the toughest race in my life coming back here, but I came back here. Leader REID came back here. PATTY MURRAY came back here. MICHAEL BENNET came back here. And we run the Senate. President Obama is the President. He happens to be a Democrat. And in the House, the Republicans won a huge victory—a huge victory. The Republicans run the House, the Democrats run the Senate, and the President is a Democrat. Let's see, that is three branches, two-thirds run by the Democrats. The Republicans want it all. If one of my kids did that, if they were arguing with the other one, I would say that is not right. I am not even asking for two-thirds. As Senator MIKULSKI said, we have come a long way from where we want to come. Where have they come? They have not come toward us. Now the plan the Republicans want is to revisit this debt crisis in 3 months, 4 months, 5 months from now. Imagine roiling the markets.

I used to be a stockbroker a very long time ago. In those years when the President got a cold, the market went down, everyone was worried. We never had a crisis like this. Do you know we have raised the debt limit 89 times in our history? No political party—no Republican Party, no Democratic Party—has ever held the debt ceiling increase hostage to their desires, hopes, and dreams.

What does the other side want? They will be honest—not all of them. They want cuts in Social Security, Medicare. They even had a proposal over in the House to end Medicare as we know it. We are not going there. We will not go there. We will not be revisiting this every 3 or 4 months. It is a recipe for a downgrade in our bonds. It is a recipe for turmoil in the marketplace. It is a recipe for higher mortgage rates. It is a recipe for more unemployment. It is a recipe for chaos.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Will the Senator yield?

Mrs. BOXER. I would be happy to.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. I was on the phone today listening to people call in from Ohio, taking calls. I heard so many people very afraid of the Boehner legislation and what might come out of a further compromise. Senator REID, as the Senator said, has offered a good many cuts and doing this in a way that is bipartisan.

Is the Senator hearing that in her State there is a real fear that the Republicans in the House are insisting on Social Security and Medicare cuts and what that would mean to people in her State?

Mrs. BOXER. Absolutely. We are the largest State in the Union with 38 million people. We have more people on Social Security and Medicare than any other State. They know what the

stakes are. They are smart. If we look at the polls, 70 percent of the people say: Tax millionaires and billionaires; they should pay their fair share. Spare Social Security, Medicare, education and the things that we need.

We are here in a manmade crisis. This is unnecessary. This has never been done before, and I think the people have to understand that. Never ever has this been done before. We raised the debt ceiling 18 times when Ronald Reagan was President. I happened to be in the House of Representatives. Yes, a few people here and there voted no once in a while, but no one ever thought of bringing down that vote. We cannot have the greatest country in the world defaulting on our bonds. We cannot have us defaulting on our contracts.

Small businesses are calling me—I say to my friend from Ohio and my friend from Maryland and my friend from Alaska—and they are saying they cannot get credit now. The banks are fearful. They are only getting overnight credit. What are we doing in this manmade crisis? We have a long history of working together at times such as this.

Leader REID's office is open. The door is open. This is the time to work together. We have until 1 in the morning when we hope we can get an up-or-down vote on Leader REID's proposal. I know there are talks going on. I have been talking to my Republican friends. They want to find a way out of this. But you know what. We have to pledge allegiance to the flag, not to Grover Norquist. We have to do what is right for the country. I pray and I hope that we do.

I will say this: If we fail, I hope the President will invoke the 14th amendment. Everyone should read it. It says the debt of the United States shall not be questioned. If we cannot get together, the President will have to take responsibility. I hope we can and show the world that we can still work together.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The gentlelady from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I follow my friend from California, and I agree wholeheartedly with her that the United States of America cannot default on its debts and obligations. I would like to think that all 100 of us in this body would concur and agree that we must, using every tool that we have at our disposal, using all of our relationships and what we have built as Members in this body and in the House of Representatives, that we use our best efforts to ensure we do not default as a nation but that we go further, that we go further and we offer the people of this country a solution to the problems that have led us to the point that we are today.

We have heard a great deal over the course of these past few days about the Boehner plan and whether it is good, bad, or indifferent, and now the Reid

plan and whether it is good, bad, or indifferent. We assumably know what the Republicans want and what the Democrats want.

What about what the people of this country want right now? I don't know what all of the people of America want, but I can give you some ideas about what I am hearing from the people of Alaska and what they are concerned about and what they want from the Senate, from the U.S. House of Representatives, and from the President of this country. They want us to fix it. Odd that it should be so easy. Just fix it. They expect us to do just that. They expect us to fix this problem. That is why they have entrusted us with their confidence by allowing us the privilege to come and represent them in this body to help resolve these issues.

They don't expect that I, as a Republican, am going to resolve it with just the Republicans. They expect that we, as Members of the Senate, will resolve this—Republicans and Democrats alike. They believe we will achieve a compromise built on the good ideas that come from the Republicans and the good ideas that come from the Democrats; that we will come together to solve the problems that affect the people in the great State of Maryland and the people in the great State of Alaska, and all the places in between.

In our effort to fix this, they expect us to compromise. Compromise should not be a negative or a nasty term. It should be what we all work to achieve jointly.

I would suggest that the other thing the people are looking for is honesty. They are listening to this debate. We have received phone calls in my office all day. We have been receiving them all week. I think so many of us have picked up the phones ourselves to hear what people are saying when they are calling. They are saying: Wait a minute. You guys are throwing numbers around. First of all, Speaker BOEHNER puts out a plan, and, well, it doesn't achieve the 1-to-1 ratio that he thought, so he pulls it back and so we have another set. Now Senator REID has his proposal on the floor, but people are talking about this \$1 trillion that is going for the war effort in Afghanistan and Iraq that we know is not really real and these are phantom numbers.

They are saying: Who are we to believe? Why are you not honest with us about the proposals that are out there? Does it cut? Would you expect that it will cut if, in fact, we are going to be focused on entitlements, Social Security? If we are going to be talking about tax revenues and how we might deal with tax reform? Can you not be honest with us, the American people, your constituents, the people you represent? They want a level of honesty in this discourse. We owe that to them.

People are also looking for certainty. There were some of my colleagues who spoke earlier in the day, and they were speaking from the perspective of small

businesses and how—as a small businessman or large businessperson for that matter—it is imperative that in order for a person to make those business judgment decisions in terms of whether they are going to expand, whether they are going to bring on additional employees, they need to have a level of certainty in terms of what is going to go on.

What is going to happen with tax policy? What is the future of the economy going to be? What is the jobs picture like? It is not like we all have a crystal shiny ball out there that we can predict with great precision. We don't. What we ought not be doing is injecting greater uncertainty, and that is what is happening right now.

All throughout this summer we have kind of strung people along. We all knew that August 2 was coming. We all knew the revenue was coming in and the outlays going out were not going to be measuring up, and we were going to be dealing with the potential for a default; we were going to be dealing with the potential for a downgrade in our credit rating. This is no surprise to anybody. That is where our crystal ball actually was pretty transparent. Yet we are not able to pull it together.

We managed to take a recess last week even though we were all promised we were going to be here working around the clock because we had important business to do. I was here with a colleague on Friday morning after the vote, looked around and realized I was perhaps the last Senator left here in Washington, DC. I got on a plane at 2:30 that afternoon to go to Alaska for crying out loud. We should have been here last weekend doing this instead of mere hours before we are up against our default deadline.

What does this do to the certainty or uncertainty in the economic climate, to the investment climate? I hesitate to be one that would suggest that we need to be making market decisions because we can't figure out what is going on here. I can tell you because I am hearing it in the halls. People are saying: I don't know about you, but I am looking at my investment fund or my retirement fund, and I am moving things. That is the kind of confidence they have in our ability to figure it out.

We are seeing it translate in the numbers. We saw that at the end of the week with the markets. We know tomorrow evening when the Asian markets open, everybody in the world from the financial community—this is not just the people in Washington, DC—will be looking to see whether we, as a Congress, have figured it out and if we have fixed it. If we don't, that continued uncertainty just continues this spiral.

We can do a lot in the Senate. We can do a lot in the Congress. We can pass bills and the President can sign them into law. One of the things we cannot legislate is we cannot tell the markets to shape up. We cannot tell the mar-

kets to pull it back in, everything is going to be OK. They are picking up on signals, and the signals right now are a level of uncertainty that is rattling.

The other thing that I think the people of this country are hoping for, are asking for, is a level of civility and respect within this body to our President, to those in the other body. We all come from different persuasions. Alaska is different from Maryland. My politics are different from your politics, Madam President, but I have great respect for you. We can argue and we can disagree, but we don't need to poke fingers in one another's eyes to get our point across.

I think what the people have seen, as we have engaged in this debate, is something that does not do justice to the integrity of this institution. We need to get back to that point where we can engage in good debate and disagree heartily and make our arguments without being disrespectful of one another and the perspectives we, as individuals representing our constituents and our States, bring to the table.

The hour is late. We will have a vote at 1 o'clock in the morning. How dignified. What body comes together at the darkest hour to cast a vote?

Last evening, my brother and sister-in-law were in town. They were passing through very quickly. They were actually able to be here and watch for about an hour and a half while we were engaged in the vote on the floor. My brother and sister-in-law are pretty educated people. They follow the news. They follow the politicians. They were fascinated by what was going on in this body and trying to understand what it was that was going on. I was trying to convey it to them, and I realized, if it is this difficult for me as a Member of this body to explain to somebody who is pretty plugged into what is going on, what is happening here, imagine the confusion of the person who just occasionally tunes in to C-SPAN, who reads the news or watches the evening news but isn't following the day-to-day. What we have managed to do is, on a bipartisan basis, confuse the American public, anger them, frustrate them, and cause them to be fearful about the future of our country. That is not leadership.

We have an opportunity in these next very short days ahead to regain some of this. We have some ideas that are out there. As the Senator from California has mentioned, and many others have mentioned, there are a great number of talks that are going on. There are talks at the leadership level. There are talks going on with those of us who are not part of leadership. That is important. But we need to recognize it is absolutely critical for the future of our country—not the future of our political well-being but the future of our country—that we be coming together to resolve the issues, not necessarily just to broker a deal but to find a solution that puts the interests of our country

above our own political interests. That is where we need to be.

I am an optimist. I am a person who has the glass always half full. I remain committed to working with all Members of good will who will stand together to work through these difficult details. It is not easy, but they never promised us it was going to be.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas. Before she begins, I would advise her, her side has 16 minutes 50 seconds.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Thank you, Madam President.

I rise to speak about the August 2 debt ceiling deadline and the proposal that will be before us very soon, developed by Majority Leader REID.

Here we are again debating legislation that demonstrates our fundamental differences in how we should run our government. I wish to quote from a recent article by Charles Krauthammer that appeared in the *National Review*. I think it says something I have been saying several times in the last week, which is that this is more than a debt ceiling debate; it is a debate about our views of government that are so different between the parties in our country. Here is what Charles Krauthammer said:

We're in the midst of a great four-year national debate on the size and reach of government, the future of the welfare state, indeed, the nature of the social contract between citizen and state. The distinctive visions of the two parties—social-Democratic versus limited-government—have underlain every debate on every issue since Barack Obama's inauguration: the stimulus, the auto bailouts, health-care reform, financial regulation, deficit spending. Everything. The debt ceiling is but the latest focus of this fundamental divide.

The sausage-making may be unsightly—

No argument there—

but the problem is not that Washington is broken—

As he describes it—

that ridiculous, ubiquitous cliché. The problem is that these two visions are in competition, and the definitive popular verdict has not yet been rendered.

He goes on to say:

We're only at the midpoint. Obama won a great victory in 2008 that he took as a mandate to transform America toward European-style social democracy. The subsequent counterrevolution delivered to that project a staggering rebuke in November of 2010.

I think that puts a perspective on the debates we have been having during the last 2 years and the debate we are seeing now in the last few weeks.

I do know that none of us wants our country to go into default. Both sides can agree on that. All of us are troubled with the delay in resolving this issue. Uncertainty is not good for our economy, but a bad agreement is worse because it will have lasting impacts. It is my opinion it will also affect our debtors with a message that we are not serious about a \$14 trillion debt and we are not going to do anything that would try to bring it down or bring

down the deficits or change the entitlement programs that are a major part—more than half—of our budget.

I support Speaker BOEHNER's bill, and I support the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act. Both of these plans, in my opinion, contain the right approach to our budget challenges. I believe the Reid plan is the wrong approach. The Reid plan contains what they say is a \$2.4 trillion debt limit increase which, if enacted, would result in the single largest increase in the debt ceiling in the history of America.

In addition to this unprecedented increase, the Reid plan fails to address our current fiscal imbalance. It doesn't do anything to address the fundamental problems. It lacks any adequate enforcement, and it doesn't ensure that long-term spending cuts are carried out. There is no guarantee at all. So we raise the debt limit and we don't have anything but a promise, and that is not good enough. It is not good enough for the elected leaders of our country, and it is certainly not good enough for the American public.

The debt ceiling increase in the Reid plan is not paid for. Many of the cuts outlined in his plan are illusory or hopeful. Hope is not a strategy. We can hope to do away with waste, fraud, and abuse, but we can't promise right now because we don't have it before us. If we had a bill that cuts certain amounts from certain agencies because of waste, fraud, and abuse, that would be a commitment we could uphold. But what we have is a promise that we will look at it. How many times have we looked at waste, fraud, and abuse in our government programs? Yes, we ought to do it, but we should not make it the basis of lifting a debt ceiling that is crushing the economy in our country.

To label \$1 trillion of cuts as savings from leaving Afghanistan and Iraq, which Senator REID's proposal does, is not credible. For one thing, we don't know what the future obstacles in Afghanistan and Iraq are. We have to retain a certain level of stability on the ground in Afghanistan. I have met with Afghan leaders and women just in the last couple weeks, and they also agree that if America leaves precipitously without knowing what the stability on the ground is—and we certainly haven't seen stability lately with the assassinations of mayors and leaders, including the half brother of the leader of Afghanistan—that is not stability. It doesn't say they are ready yet. So having \$1 trillion of cuts could undermine our national security. I hope we can leave with the right circumstances on the ground, but that is the only criteria we should use and not cutting a budget that we know is a promise and not a commitment we are assured we can keep.

Most disturbing of all in the Reid plan: The only possible justification for a \$2.4 trillion increase in borrowing authority is to avoid doing this again before the 2012 election. That is not a reason to make public policy. Yes, none of

us would want to go through this again in the next year. It has been painful—painful for all sides—but just saying: We are going to do it with promises and hope for the future is certainly not a way to address a major policy issue, and it is not going to have the credibility with the American people.

I believe it would be irresponsible to give the President this unprecedented additional borrowing authority without requiring the enactment of significant spending reductions and reforms. To do so would send a worse signal to the markets across the world that are shaky right now, looking at this debate. But they are also looking at what the result is going to be and who is going to win the battle about how we run our government. Can we imagine a \$16 trillion debt ceiling with no commitment to actually make the cuts that would start getting us on the right path? That is not enough. That is why we are here at a quarter of 9 on Saturday night debating this issue, because we are not going to give up on our principles of making sure the fiscal responsibility of our country will be worthy of a AAA rating, will be worthy of the assuredness that if you buy a bond or a Treasury note or invest in the United States of America, that it is a golden commitment, that you can count on it, that you can take it to the bank. That is what we are fighting for right now.

I hope so much we can come to an agreement because we all agree that defaulting on our debt would not be a good signal to the markets, but raising the debt ceiling without the assured cuts, without caps on future years' spending is unconscionable.

I hope going forward we would have a balanced budget amendment that would go to the States because most States have a balanced budget amendment in their constitutions and they have mostly sound fiscal policies. If we had to live with those same constraints, I believe we would not get into this kind of a situation again. Eventually, I hope we will have a balanced budget amendment that we could get a two-thirds vote for and send to the States and see if that isn't a worthy amendment to our great Constitution. But in the meantime, cut and cap is what we can do, and I hope we will.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, I feel compelled to come to the floor this evening to refute some of the arguments that have been made by some of my colleagues, points that are important for the American people to understand, points that, if not clarified, could lead to a misunderstanding, lead to resentment which is misplaced.

One of the points I have heard made this evening by one of my colleagues is that the debt limit issue has never been held hostage quite like it has now. I am not quite sure what was meant by this, but I do want to clarify this point.

If someone had held this hostage before on any of the dozens and dozens of times the debt limit has been raised over the course of many years, maybe it would have been a good thing. Maybe it would be a good thing for us not to be dealing with right now a national debt that has almost reached \$15 trillion.

Maybe we should consider the fact that those who are being held hostage are those who will one day have to repay this debt, considering that some of those people are not yet here because they have yet to be born, and in some instances, their parents have yet to meet. We have to ask the question whether they are being held hostage themselves—held hostage to a government that always demands more money so it can exercise more power over us. And as it acquires more power, exercises more of that over us—thus restricting our liberty—it demands more money. As it acquires more money, it exercises more power, and the process perpetuates itself. This is how we get to the point where we are almost \$15 trillion in debt. This is how we get to the point where the American people are being held hostage. So if this process has not been held up in the past, then shame on those who could have held it up but did not.

It is incumbent upon us who serve here and now to represent those who are sometimes underrepresented to represent those most vulnerable members of society who are not yet old enough to vote or not yet born. This is a multigenerational problem. It is a multigenerational obligation we are taking upon our entire country in connection with this debate.

So if my colleague who made this point just about half an hour ago meant that we should never have vigorous, aggressive debate and discussion over whether it is a good idea to take on \$2.5 trillion in new debt in one fell swoop, perhaps we should revisit that assumption; perhaps we ought to second-guess ourselves just a little bit more than we have in recent decades lest we hold hostage an entire generation.

Another point that was made by that same colleague is that Republicans have put forward plans to challenge, to undermine, to bring about immediate cuts to Social Security and Medicare. This simply is not true. Quite to the contrary. The Cut, Cap, and Balance Act—of which I was the lead sponsor in the Senate before it was introduced in the House by my friend JASON CHAFFETZ, where it was later passed—Cut, Cap, and Balance Act actually protected Social Security and Medicare. It bolstered, it strengthened those programs. So it is utterly false and, I believe, disingenuous for anyone to argue that proposal—or any other that I am aware of, for that matter—would bring about cuts to Social Security and Medicare. This is not the point of this legislation. Quite to the contrary. The point of this legislation is to

protect what we need to do through the U.S. Government.

Whether you are someone who would describe himself as a conservative and perhaps most concerned about national defense or whether you are perhaps more liberal and you are most concerned about protecting our entitlement programs, you ought to agree with the principles underlying the cut, cap, and balance approach, with the fact that we need a balanced budget amendment, because if we do not put these measures in place now, if we do not agree now that we need to restrict our borrowing authority, every one of those programs will be jeopardized as we reach the mathematical, the economic borrowing capacity of the U.S. Government.

The more we borrow, the more we run into the risk that those who lend us money, those who buy our U.S. Treasuries, will one day be unwilling to lend us more money, at least not without additional interest payments. We could very quickly go from spending about \$250 billion a year in interest, as we now are, to spending something much closer to \$1 trillion a year in interest based on just a few interest rate points. As that goes up, our ability to fund everything goes down.

In closing, it is important to point out that what is being requested here is the largest debt limit increase in American history—about \$2.5 trillion. Unprecedented. The idea here is to give the U.S. Congress enough borrowing power to take us almost 2 years down the road. Two years, by the way, is roughly the amount of time that has elapsed since the Democrats in the Senate even introduced a budget.

One has to ask, why extend the debt limit for such a long period of time? The President gave us the answer the other day. He wants to insulate himself from the political process. He wants to make it not a political issue. Political issues are themselves things the voters are concerned about—as well they should be—because voters pay taxes, voters are affected by decisions we make. We need to have voters connected, not disconnected from this process.

We need to act now, but we need to act responsibly. The only way to do that is to raise the debt limit only after we pass the balanced budget amendment.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the alternating blocks of time continue until 9:50 p.m., with the majority controlling the time until 9:20 p.m., the Republican side controlling the time until 9:50 p.m., and then the majority leader or designee be recognized.

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

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam President, I rise tonight, as I have for

many weeks now, to call for a bipartisan solution to our deficits and debt, for us to bridge—to use a term we utilize in Colorado—the mountainous divide in order to avoid defaulting on our obligations.

Bipartisanship is a familiar theme in my home State of Colorado, and I know Coloradans agree with me that is the only way forward. My constituents have been flooding my office with calls of frustration urging me to keep fighting for a solution to this impending debt limit crisis we face. They know the stakes are high, and they know we have to compromise to get something done.

As I have traveled my State over these summer months, I have not found one single person in Colorado who has demanded more partisanship and more dysfunction. But here we are, seemingly, on a Saturday night with just that. My constituents—Coloradans—are searching for answers and solutions. Yet all we seem to have here are more questions.

For the life of me, I just do not understand why, when our economy is still fragile, we are so close, it seems, to sentencing it to additional turmoil.

Those who know me know I am not quick to anger or to express frustration, but I just cannot help but join Coloradans in looking at the situation we are in with disbelief. We have hard-working and well-intentioned Members from both parties who are willing to do the right thing for our country, but partisan bickering is seemingly continuing to artificially push our economy closer and closer, literally, to the brink.

It is easy to chalk this up to a broken Washington, to say Congress simply is unable to agree, but that ignores the truth. That truth is that a small minority of folks is bent on throwing sand in the gears of our legislative machinery. We extend a hand in the hopes of reaching an agreement, and then over and over this group rejects the idea of governing together and instead reaches for another handful of sand. The majority of us here do not agree with that. The majority of us in both parties do not want to default on our debt obligations.

It seems to me our country's economic situation is like a patient who is just literally coming off life support: We are nursing our economy back to health, and the last thing we need is a self-induced heart attack. But that will happen in 3 days. In 3 days, our Nation is set to default on its debt. That is like an American family who would decide not to pay their bills or to quit making mortgage payments. I know it is a natural inclination, perhaps, to not want to pay those bills, but Americans know there are consequences to default and that it is irresponsible to turn a blind eye on bills that come due.

It is important to note that these are bills we already have incurred, that previous Congresses—in fact, this Congress, you could argue, has already voted for and therefore has incurred.

We have been here before. President Reagan raised the debt limit 18 times in order to enable the Treasury to pay our debts as they came due. They were routine. They were often voice votes, and when they were recorded votes, they were overwhelmingly in support of raising the debt limit so we could meet previous obligations. President George W. Bush raised it seven times. There were no conditions put on the raising of our debt ceiling.

Let me take a second and be clear. Raising the debt ceiling is not something I want to do and I am sure anybody in the Senate is not all that keen to do it, but we do have those obligations.

A year ago—a year and a half ago, I should say, more accurately—I agreed with Republicans and fellow Democrats that we should take advantage of a discussion we had at the end of 2009 about raising the debt ceiling, and we should take advantage of that by putting in place real measures to reduce our debt. I held out my vote at that time to raise the debt limit as a way to compel the White House to create a fiscal commission to address our long-term deficits and debt.

I was really pleased when President Obama created such a commission. He nominated two great Americans—Al Simpson, who was a Senator in this very body, and former White House Chief of Staff Erskine Bowles—to head up the effort. I think, as we knew at the time—and we know even more now—these two men are patriots. They brought people together from both parties, and they came up with a \$4 trillion plan—it was commonsensical—to bring in and rein in our debt problems. We applauded their efforts. Coloradans did; Americans all over the country did. They brought a commonsense approach, just as we would in our own personal finances.

So when we approached our current debt limit this year and faced the possibility of defaulting on our debt, I joined Members of both parties in urging us here in the Congress to do two things: first, to address our debt limit problem to prevent a first-ever and completely avoidable default so America could and would pay its bills and secondly, enact a comprehensive and bipartisan \$4 trillion plan based on the Simpson-Bowles deficit reduction recommendations so we would get our fiscal house in order, I should say for generations of Americans to come but for those of us here today as well.

Now, if you look back on this, this in some ways was unpopular. Folks on the far right and the far left began to sow seeds of division in order to prevent compromise. People in our party objected to spending cuts and entitlement reforms, while Republican purists, such as Grover Norquist, complained about increased revenues.

That brings us to the events of the last several weeks. Those of us who support a commonsense middle ground and who believe our country's biggest

national security threat is our growing national debt know that both sides need to compromise and that we need a long-term, comprehensive bipartisan—bipartisan—plan to truly heal the fiscal illnesses that have beset us.

This is obvious just looking at the numbers, but it became even clearer when our creditors and U.S. rating agencies began to question whether America was a creditworthy nation. Can you imagine that? They began to ask: Will America pay its bills? Will we be able to pay our bills or will we go the way of an Ireland or a Greece and other financially destabilized nations?

To me, the answer is clear: A broke nation is a weak nation. If America is not only going to lead the global economic race but win that race, as we know we can, as we have done throughout history, we need to implement the Bowles-Simpson recommendations.

With that knowledge, a smart group of people from both parties began working out a way to do so. But there was one huge impediment: Hundreds, literally hundreds of Members of Congress signed a pledge promising not to touch the Tax Code, putting tax purity ahead of fiscal responsibility and deficit reduction. Even though the United States brought in a record-low amount of revenue last year, what they insist we do would—whether intentionally or unintentionally—balance the budget on the backs of the middle class, the elderly, and the disenfranchised alone.

Even though the Bowles-Simpson commission recommended a blending of 75-percent spending cuts and 25-percent revenue increases, they seemingly, this small minority here in the Capitol, cannot embrace any plan that includes additional revenue. Even though our Tax Code is littered with literally thousands of special interest tax breaks and corporate giveaways that do nothing to create jobs, they cannot embrace, it seems, tax reform. Even though a bipartisan plan would send a message to the markets that America is ready to lead, and that Congress is capable of independent thinking and problem solving, they have rejected a bipartisan way forward, a way in which we govern together. So that plan sits idly. It sits to the side. All sides have tried other efforts, but they faced the same problems. Speaker BOEHNER and President Obama sought to strike an alternative grand bargain as a way to address our structural deficits and debt to avoid default. That looked pretty promising. But it appears to me that when the going got tough, the Speaker did not stay at the table. And when it became apparent that the corporations and the wealthy would have to bear the responsibility for balancing the books, the House Speaker walked away. Another chapter unfolded.

Things looked promising when the Vice President and the House majority leader tried to reach an agreement on a deficit reduction plan. But then, when it became clear again that revenues

had to be a part of the picture if we truly wanted to do something big and good for our country, they walked away from the table. Tax purity was more important than deficit reduction. Knowing that economists, market analysts, business leaders, credit rating agencies, world leaders, and the American people were imploring us, imploring us, to find an agreement to avoid default on our debt obligations, Democrats relented.

We are now debating what the Republicans said they wanted, a spending-cut-only plan. I cannot tell you the depth of my disappointment that we could not pursue a truly comprehensive approach to reducing our deficits and debt, one that would set the stage to continue growing our economy and creating jobs. But in the name of compromise, I agreed that something versus nothing is better than default and further economic turmoil. But now it appears, on a Saturday night, a few hours from midnight, that even that is not enough. After putting together a plan that includes 100 percent of the Republican-endorsed spending cuts to avoid default, we are at an impasse again. We have got a plan here on the floor of the Senate that cuts \$2.47 trillion from the Federal budget, without any revenue, not a single tax loophole is closed, and yet we still cannot get our House colleagues to help us prevent a first-ever default of the Federal Government.

I have learned to not question the motivations of my colleagues. But I have to ask myself what is it they want now in the House of Representatives? And they want exactly, it seems to me, what the Bank of America, Standard & Poors, JPMorgan Chase, Moody's, and other economic experts have warned us we can least afford: that is, constant turmoil and dysfunction. They literally—whether they understand this or not—want us to walk our economy, America's economy, the biggest economy in the world, right up to the cliff edge of default over and over again. The markets and business leaders have told us they want to increase investment, they want to create more jobs, they want to get our economy back on track, but what they need is certainty. But it seems as though there are those in the Capitol, in our Congress, who have decided it is in their interest—political interest—to create uncertainty, exactly the opposite of what our markets and our business communities are telling us—the same Members of Congress, the same individuals who ironically complained that our President has not done enough to create jobs or spur economic growth. Yet we are perilously close, and they are perilously close, to cutting off the economic growth we need to create jobs. In the interests of being direct, if we default, this would be an economic catastrophe of our own making. It is not something beyond our control such as a hurricane, an earthquake, a tornado, a drought. We can avoid the im-

pending chaos and the job loss and the downgrading of our retirement savings that is coming our way. If we do not, it will be because some Members of Congress were unwilling to take yes for an answer. Some Members of Congress right now are unwilling to take yes for an answer.

But let me begin to close my remarks on a little more optimistic note. I want to be very clear. There are Members in both parties who are willing to be responsible. I was pleased to hear that Senator ALEXANDER, the third ranking Republican in the Senate, say what would be best, instead of having a Republican plan competing with a Democratic plan, would be to have Speaker BOEHNER, Senator REID, and Senator MCCONNELL recommend to us a single plan.

Senator THUNE said yesterday: I think if you look at the basic framework, it wouldn't be that hard to figure out something we could perhaps agree upon.

I listened to Senator ISAKSON and Senator MURKOWSKI express similar thoughts earlier today. So I think there is a real kernel here of optimism and a way forward. But for the life of me, I cannot understand why we cannot keep our focus on job creation and the global economic race. The rest of the world is not waiting for us. They are on the march.

I am an old mountain climber, in more ways than one, and I can tell you, I have learned that there are some similarities between attempting some of the world's highest peaks and working here in Washington, DC. But the difference, I found, is that when the going gets tough here on Capitol Hill, it always seems as though not only do we face the challenges the mountain presents, but there is a team of saboteurs who are trying to push and pull you off the mountain.

I have to say that I believe if all of us would turn away and frankly ignore the partisan campaign machines that are out there always churning, we could get something meaningful done here. The people of Colorado, from whom I take my instructions, and to whom I listen, have let it be known to me these last few days—and I think the rest of the Nation—they do not care who wins politically. Frankly, I do not care who wins politically either. What I care about is passing legislation—meaningful legislation, long-term legislation—that will stave off a government default and a downgrade in our Nation's credit rating. Neither of those outcomes is not acceptable. At this point, the only plan, the only comprehensive plan, the only long-term plan that gets that done is the Reid plan. So let's focus on the Reid plan. I urge my colleagues to support the vote we are going to have—the historic vote we will have later this evening. Let's get it done. Let's get our country back on track. Let's win the global economic race.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, I would first like to commend and

thank Senator REID for his tireless and relentless hard work, and my Democratic colleagues, but also some of my Republican colleagues—Senator JOHN-
NY ISAKSON, for example—who have demonstrated their determination to work together to reach an agreement.

You know I am new to Washington. I haven't been here for long, but I understand more than ever why Americans are so frustrated and often appalled about what goes on here.

This situation is outrageous. We have an impending crisis—self-created—and devastating possible wounds—self-inflicted—and Washington is deadlocked. Washington is gridlocked and straightjacketed by self-imposed dysfunction, unable to take action to protect its citizens from a financial catastrophe.

Our Nation is at a crossroads, and we need to rein in spending, cut the debt and the deficit, and make the tough choices necessary to get our fiscal house in order. And we need to do it now.

The latest economic news provides all the more reason for the tough choices and solutions we need now. It shows our economic recovery is anemic and fragile.

Uncertainty is the enemy. It is the enemy for businesses that are deciding whether to hire; for banks wanting to loan money to those businesses; for larger corporations sitting on mountains of cash waiting to invest and create jobs.

Jobs and our economy are the main reasons to make tough choices now.

We cannot keep kicking cans down the road: the time has come to act.

Families in Connecticut and across the country make tough choices every day—and they rightfully expect nothing less from us. Tough choices are necessary to help us get our debt and deficit under control.

I have heard from hundreds of Connecticut residents in the last few days who are frustrated—appalled—at what is going on in Washington, DC.

Like Bernice from Tolland, CT. She can't believe that we don't have an agreement yet because she is worried that she won't receive her Social Security check next month.

And Jane from West Hartford. She is wondering why we are protecting sweetheart deals instead of ensuring Social Security is protected and strengthened.

And Rod from New Milford. He just wants us to compromise and to get something done and end this nightmare.

I agree with them—and hundreds more—and I thank them for calling or writing.

I agree that the immediate solution is not only to raise the debt ceiling but also to cut spending dollar for dollar to match that increase, without tax increases, and without any cuts—none—to Social Security and Medicare.

The markets need a real solution—not a short-term fix—to demonstrate

that we are committed to achieving real results in cutting spending.

Anne from Hamden, CT makes this point powerfully. She just called today to say a short-term plan would not provide the certainty the markets are desperately seeking. I agree. It risks a credit-rating downgrade and ensures that we would be right back here in another 6 months.

Credit ratings and downgrades seem abstract, intangible, but they are hugely consequential.

A downgrade in our credit rating would likely cause an automatic tax increase in the form of higher interests for every American with a mortgage, car loan, student loan or credit card. The American people deserve better.

Coming together to compromise is essential now. Majority Leader REID has proposed a solution that meets all of the criteria that House Republicans have demanded for weeks: It does not raise taxes or other revenues. It includes enough spending cuts to meet the amount of debt-ceiling increase, dollar for dollar.

These spending cuts are the same as our Republican colleagues have previously voted for and supported.

Most importantly, Senator REID's plan makes tough spending cuts, but doesn't balance our budget on the backs of seniors—it protects vital programs and does not make cuts in benefits to Medicare or Social Security.

Time and time again, Democrats have shown that we are willing to compromise to avert a catastrophic default. Unfortunately, at every turn, Republicans in the House—and now in the Senate—have blocked any chance for progress, and continue to put us on an increasingly dangerous path as the deadline for raising the debt limit approaches.

And now, Senate Republicans are willing to filibuster our Nation into default.

Today's filibuster of our efforts to prevent a default is unprecedented.

Since March 1962, Congress has raised the debt limit 74 times—18 times under President Reagan alone.

During George W. Bush's administration, Congress passed five stand-alone debt limit increases, without filibuster or delay.

Until today, debt limit increases were routine, usually passed by a simple 51-vote majority, without the procedural hurdles my Republican colleagues are using today.

They need to come to the table and work with us to find a compromise that works—for the good of the country and for the good of our economic recovery.

So I hope that my Republican colleagues will join us in ensuring stability for our markets and for our fragile economic recovery in order to avoid harm for millions of Connecticut families—and keep our economy moving in the right direction.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. REED.) The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, there are no easy answers to our current dilemma. The majority leader's proposal is the best option we have to overcome the bipartisan impasse. Failure to increase the debt limit is not an option. Working families cannot afford the increased costs associated with default, and seniors cannot afford not to have their Social Security payments.

In my time as a mayor, as a State legislator, as a Member of the House of Representatives, and now as a Senator, I have learned there are times when one needs to stand and fight, and there are other times when one needs to reach a compromise. I am not excited about the decisions we are being forced to make, but I think the majority leader has crafted a proposal that can bring the two parties together and avoid economic disaster without destroying Medicare, Social Security, and other priorities of working families.

If you compare that to Speaker BOEHNER's proposal, that is just more of the partisan gamesmanship, and the path we have to take becomes clear. So I rise today in favor of the majority leader's plan in the hope that reason will prevail on the other side, and that our Republican colleagues will finally agree to help govern and not make irrational demands that drive us down the road to default.

Having said that, these debt negotiations have left America longing for a better time and a better government, a time when public service was, as Robert Kennedy said, a noble profession, when public servants served the public's interests, when they came together and found common ground and respected the opinions of those on the other side.

My generation has always viewed public service as a noble profession and the fight for what we believe is right as a noble cause. But none of us should expect to win every battle. None of us should dismiss the valid beliefs of those whose politics we oppose but who have been duly elected and sworn in to represent their State or their district.

The tea party Republicans in the House seem to have forgotten that we live in a democracy, and in a democracy people hold different views, contrary but equally valid opinions. They approach problems differently, from a different perspective, a different background, a different political view, and have differing views on the best solution.

The art of governing is bridging those differences. Governing is finding common ground. Governing is what Ronald Reagan talked about in his autobiography, "An American Life,"

when he spoke about the importance of political compromise. He understood that in a representative democracy each of us has a right to our opinion but not a right to our own way.

President Reagan said:

When I began entering into the give and take of the legislative bargaining—

This is in Sacramento. This is when he was Governor—

a lot of the most radical conservatives who had supported me during the election did not like it.

Compromise was a dirty word to them, and they wouldn't face the fact that we couldn't get all of what we wanted today. They wanted all or nothing, and they wanted it all at once. If you don't get it all, some said don't take anything.

Sound familiar? It should. It is the view of today's radical tea party—the same view Ronald Reagan confronted.

Reagan went on to say:

I learned while negotiating union contracts that you seldom get everything you asked for. And I agreed with FDR, who said, in 1933, "I have no expectations of making a hit every time I come to bat. What I seek is the highest possible batting average."

If you got seventy-five or eighty percent of what you were asking for, I say, you take it and fight for the rest later, and that's what I told these radical conservatives who never got used to it.

Ronald Reagan in his own words—a lesson from a conservative hero for those modern-day radical conservatives who have watched us walk 90 yards down the field, but would rather move the goal posts than meet us at the 10-yard line. Ronald Reagan would tell them to grow up, step up and govern. But they have reiterated the mantra of the radical conservatives Reagan faced: "If you don't get it all, don't take anything."

Edmund Burke, another conservative icon, once said something today's House Republicans today would label as "weakness" or "too liberal." He said:

Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do a little.

House Republicans have chosen to do nothing. Edmund Burke understood the art of governing and the art of compromise. Ronald Reagan knew how radical conservatives think, how they negotiate, and now we are seeing how they stand in the way of governance and governing to maintain the purity of their ideology.

Clearly, Democrats have offered much. We have offered the other side an opportunity to govern, and they have rejected it on ideological grounds. We have lived up to our duty to govern. They have lived up to Ronald Reagan's own view of radical conservative tactics and philosophy.

I say to my friends, it is time to compromise and time to govern.

I was shocked to witness the audacity of the House Republicans who stepped to the microphone this week, one by one, each claiming that, if this Nation defaults on its obligations, it will be the President's fault. It will be

the Democrats who caused us to default.

Democrats have come a long way and the Republicans know it—they just won't accept it, and they can't sell it to the American people because the American people know the truth.

Everyone knows the House tea party Republicans have rejected every proposal. They have even rejected the Republican Speaker's original proposal. They claim to love democracy and freedom of speech only when it is their speech, only when it expresses their ideas and their beliefs.

They claim to love our system of government, but clearly are at war with the idea of governing, and with all those on this side who—I would respectfully remind them—have also been elected to serve, just as they have.

They claim to embrace constitutional notions of tolerance and majority rule, but clearly see such notions as an inconvenient obstacle to getting their own way. They have the audacity to blame us for offering them what they want, and then to claim we haven't offered enough—that we are the problem.

The fact is, with the plan the majority leader has put forth, Democrats are now offering exactly what the Republicans have asked for, and yet they still will not take yes for an answer.

They even claim that they are willing to compromise as long as it is within their framework—the framework of their original demands—that they will compromise on the kind of a balanced budget amendment we pass. They will only compromise on how deep the cuts to entitlements are, but they will not compromise on subsidies to big oil companies or billionaire tax cuts that wealthy Americans have, themselves, told us they don't need.

In effect their only compromise is getting their own way and calling it compromise. Well there is a difference between compromise and total capitulation. There must be a common ground that simply doesn't call for surrender. There's an Old Scottish proverb that says: "Better bend than break."

I say to my colleagues: We have done all the bending. Now it is time to govern.

I say to my colleagues: "Better bend than break," because in this case it is our economic integrity that stands to break.

It is time for the truth.

It is time we look at the real impact on real people's lives if Republicans continue to stand firm—unwilling to bend, unwilling to compromise, unwilling to govern—but clearly willing to take America down the road to default.

According to Secretary Geithner, the consequences for the Nation—and for millions in my State of New Jersey—would be deep and far-reaching.

Failure to raise the debt limit—failure to allow Treasury to meet the obligations of the United States that we have already incurred—would be the

ultimate tax increase on every American.

As such, surely it would violate the radical right's pledge to Grover Norquist. And, make no mistake, it would be a tax increase.

The no-compromise-Republican tax-increase would come in the form of increased interest rates—driving up the costs for every American family: the cost of mortgage payments would increase over \$1,000 annually; equity prices and home values would decline which, in turn, would reduce retirement savings and affect the long-term and short-term economic security of every American.

There would be reductions in spending and investments, jobs would be lost, businesses would fail, credit card interest would increase by about \$250 annually, families would be paying \$100 more for gas, \$182 for utilities, and \$318 more for groceries.

Based on J.P. Morgan's financial analysis during the debt ceiling and government shutdown debate in 1995 and the crisis in 2008, interest rates on Treasury bonds could conceivably rise 75 or even 100 basis points.

Between mortgages and credit cards alone, an increase of 75 basis points would translate into an additional \$10 billion in consumer borrowing costs every year at a time when middle class families can ill afford any increase at all in expenditures.

From an international perspective, default would have prolonged and disastrous negative consequences on the safe-haven status of Treasuries and the dollar's dominant role in the international financial system.

It would reduce the willingness of investors here and abroad to invest in the United States.

In my State of New Jersey, the impact of default would be immediate and all too real. Payments on a broad range of benefits—on other obligations—would be either postponed, limited, or discontinued.

That includes military salaries and retirement benefits for 1,219 troops currently deployed from New Jersey, both active and reservists and almost 500,000 veterans; benefits for almost 1.5 million Social Security beneficiaries and 1.3 million Medicare enrollees would be interrupted; student loan payments; Medicaid payments to States for seniors and the disabled in nursing homes, and payments needed to keep government facilities operating and providing the services people need. The total for all these expenditures for New Jersey alone is \$80 billion.

That averages out to be about \$26,000 per household in my State, putting a significant portion of the Federal Government's investment in New Jersey and its people at risk.

And yet the Republicans in the House and many in this Chamber will not bend, will not compromise, refuse to step up and govern. Their ideology demands that they protect entitlements for the most entitled Americans—big

oil, corporate jet owners, and those who hold a majority of the wealth in this Nation.

In my view, in my life, in my work, I have come to understand how wrong they are.

When the 400 richest Americans at the top hold more wealth than the 150 million Americans at the bottom, we cannot simply put the burden on those who can afford it the least and need our help the most.

Let's be clear. The Republican protection of the entitled class has nothing to do with balancing the budget or reducing the deficit, nothing to do with values, nothing to do with faith or cultural conservatism, nothing to do with community responsibility, and everything to do with an extreme antigovernment political agenda that is, in fact, anticommunity.

I believe we can do better for families, better for every American if we live and govern by the values we preach.

During this process, those of us on this side of the aisle have held to what the sociologist Max Weber once called the "ethic of responsibility."

House Republicans are pursuing what he called the "ethic of ultimate ends." George Packer in a recent New York-er article said:

These ethics are tragically opposed, but the true calling of politics requires a union of the two.

We, on this side, believe in ethical responsibility, in doing what is right for the Nation.

Republicans have shown that they believe in one thing and one thing only—achieving their ultimate political end and, in this case, achieving that end means standing in the way of any compromise—even if it threatens to paralyze this Nation's economy, even if it means rejecting the wisdom of their own hero who understood the importance of compromise in the art of governance.

I repeat what Reagan said:

Compromise was a dirty word to them, and they wouldn't face the fact that we couldn't get all of what we wanted today. They wanted all or nothing and they wanted it all at once. If you don't get it all, some said don't take anything.

Well, it is time to realize that governing is not about getting it all, it's about getting it right for the American people.

Let America understand that Reagan himself stood against those radical conservatives whose rigid adherence to ideology at the expense of reason is now taking us down the road to default.

It is on them, and it is up to them to grow up, step up, and compromise.

As the American people have said in every poll, they want a balanced approach. That means a combination of significant spending cuts but also revenues. If they accepted that, we could govern.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan is recognized.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask to be yielded 10 minutes. I understand there is no objection on the Republican side.

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

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, whatever one's position is on the best way to cut the deficit, we all should be able to agree on this: We must raise the debt ceiling. We must pay our bills. Failing to do so is to invite economic catastrophe. The American people have had their fill of catastrophe and near-catastrophe.

Recently in Afghanistan, Admiral Mullen, Chairman of our Joint Chiefs, was asked by troops if they will be paid next month. His answer was:

I honestly can't answer that question.

He added:

I'd like to give you a better answer than that right now; I just honestly don't know.

It is inconceivable to me that we will leave our troops in limbo by driving our country over the cliff by default. Our Nation's economic life is in peril. I don't remember ever in the 32 years I have been here when the Nation has been more in need of deliberation, statesmanship, and compromise.

New York Times columnist David Brooks, who is a conservative columnist, recently wrote that too many Republicans seem to have joined a "movement"—his word—in which "the members do not accept the logic of compromise, no matter what the terms." I hope that some of our Republican colleagues will prove Mr. Brooks wrong on this matter because of its huge significance.

The time for ignoring hard truths is over. Blind resistance to compromise may play well with some, but it is no way to solve hard problems or to govern. Drawing lines in the sand and issuing ultimatums may make for ringing sound bites, but no press release ever sent a child to college or gave a working family hope for a good job.

If our Republican colleagues cannot bring themselves to support the majority leader's proposal or at least to propose modifications to it, they can vote "no." But it is unthinkable to filibuster against allowing the Senate an opportunity to vote on the Reid measure itself, as this clock approaches midnight. It is one thing to vote against the Reid measure, it is quite another to deny the Senate by filibustering the opportunity to vote on the Reid measure when the issue is of such enormous importance.

Last evening, and again today, the Republican leader said they would insist on 60 votes to pass the Reid amendment. That is the definition of a filibuster threat. It is the very definition. You must have 60 votes. That is based on a threat to filibuster. Hopefully, some of our Republican colleagues will support Senator REID's proposal. It has no new revenue. Its spending cuts match the size of the debt limit increase. Its cuts have been approved by

leaders of both parties. But if our Republican colleagues don't seek to modify the Reid plan and won't vote for the plan, they at least should allow the Senate to vote on it and not filibuster. Whether Senators vote for or against the Reid legislation, the American people will not forgive a filibuster that prevents us from even voting on vital legislation as we rapidly approach a cliff. In the critically important matter now before us, there is going to be a very strong public reaction against those who, with economic calamity looming before us, deny the Senate, through a threat of a filibuster and the filibuster itself, an opportunity to vote on the Reid motion to concur.

Compromise does not come easy with an issue such as this, but the people of this country did not elect us to do easy things. They elected us to seek practical solutions. They elected us to lead. The test of leadership in the Senate on the matter before us is allowing us to vote not just on cloture, which is what the Republican leader suggests is a vote on the Reid motion—it is not—but on the Reid motion itself. The test of leadership in this Senate is not to filibuster the Senate so we can't vote on the important Reid motion but to allow us to proceed when that cloture motion is voted on.

So I call on Senate Republicans to offer changes to the Reid proposal or vote against it, if they will, but not thwart the Senate majority from voting to adopt it, should they choose. When the cloture motion is voted on, if cloture is not invoked, and the Senate is prevented from voting up or down on the Reid proposal, under our rules, debate on the Reid proposal will continue.

I want to read from the petition we are going to vote on so everybody understands what we are voting on. We are not voting on the Reid motion to concur. We are voting on whether—and these are the words of the motion—we will bring to a close the debate on that motion; will we bring to a close the debate so we can vote on the Reid motion to concur in the House amendment.

So voting against bringing debate to a close, thereby denying the majority the opportunity to act, does not defeat the majority leader's motion. It stalls it. It stymies the Senate from acting. If an end is not brought to debate when this cloture motion is voted on, the Reid motion is still the pending matter.

If the Republicans, then, are determined to filibuster against it and not allow us to vote on it, they, I believe, will see the wrath of this country brought down upon them.

Mrs. BOXER. Would the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. LEVIN. I would be happy to.

Mrs. BOXER. I want to make sure the people listening to the Senator—because he is such an expert on what goes on around here—understand this and make sure I understand it too.

The Senator is saying that when 1 a.m. this morning comes, we will have

a vote to determine whether we can stop debating the Reid amendment and actually vote on it. But if we don't get the 60 votes to do that, what will have happened is they will have stalled us, but the Reid amendment is still pending. We can't get a vote on that if the Republicans filibuster it and keep talking and talking and don't let us get to a vote; is that correct?

Mr. LEVIN. The Senator from California is exactly correct.

Mrs. BOXER. I thank my colleague because I think it is important for the people to understand. I would hope Senator REID will keep his amendment on the floor. It is the last vehicle standing to avert a default, and I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mr. LEVIN. I thank the Senator from California for reinforcing that point.

I heard one of our colleagues tonight say the Republicans are willing to give us a vote on this bill. No, they are not. The Republicans are willing to have a cloture vote brought up earlier. They then will vote against cloture. But that will do nothing in terms of bringing us closer to a vote on the Reid amendment because if they will not end debate by voting yes for cloture, if they are going to filibuster—which, apparently, they are going to do because they are determined to filibuster this bill—all that happens, if we don't get the 60 votes the first time that cloture is voted on, is it will be voted on again and again because they are filibustering. The Republicans would then be filibustering against our being able to vote on this bill.

Everyone should be very clear. I hope the public will understand what is happening. The Republicans are not willing to give us a vote on the Reid motion. They are not willing to do that. We would be happy to have a vote on the Reid motion immediately, but they insist that we get a supermajority to vote. They want to succeed in a filibuster without even filibustering. That is something which is not only not in the Senate rules, it is also inconsistent with making progress on resolving this problem.

The American people want us to compromise, and the refusal to compromise by a few Members of this body and by a number of Members of the other body is what is stymying this resolution. We cannot tolerate that. I think what we must do is continue to offer to compromise.

The majority leader is in his office, as he has been all day, waiting to hear from the Republican leader with any suggestions he wishes to make and amendments to the majority leader's motion. It has been a long wait. It has been a fruitless wait—waiting for the Republican leader to suggest modifications.

It is not enough that the Reid motion already accepts the Republican arguments of no revenue and that cuts have to equal the amount of the increase in the debt limit. Those are key demands of the Republicans.

I have a great deal of trouble not including revenues. I think it is an outrage there is not shared sacrifice in this bill; that the wealthiest among us are still paying the reduced tax rate, for instance, that President Bush proposed; that we have loopholes in the law which give incentives to businesses to move jobs overseas; that we have hedge fund managers actually paying a lower tax rate on their very large incomes than their own employees pay on lesser incomes because of a loophole in the law.

The American people want us to close these loopholes. So I have great trouble there is no shared sacrifice in the proposal before us, but that is the way it is. It only has spending cuts. So the Republicans have gotten that—only spending cuts. They have gotten their argument also that the amount of any increase in the debt limit be matched by spending cuts. It is now time to say yes or to propose an alternative.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I think it has become very clear that our Democratic colleagues want to raise taxes. They use the phrase revenues—revenues—and we need a shared sacrifice. That means people need to pay more taxes, as if that doesn't have an impact on the economy.

We have had a recent study by one of the international groups which found the United States has the most progressive tax system in the world—among the developed nations. This is all the European nations. The wealthy pay more in the United States than in those countries, according to an independent, international study. We have heard the numbers. A substantial percentage of the income taxes are paid by the top 10 percent in America. How much more do you do this?

I thought we had an agreement last December with the President in which we agreed that raising taxes at a time of economic danger is not the right thing to do. Not doing something to fix this debt limit now is not a good thing. We need to raise the debt limit. I don't know what would happen if we don't. I don't think it would be good. I think we run a risk. But the real danger we have is not the debt limit; the real danger we have is the extraordinary surging debt this Nation has, which is unlike anything we have ever had before.

It is systemic. It is part of the structure of the American economy right now that we are spending 42 percent more than we take in. We cannot keep doing that. The projections for the future are not better. So it is a very dangerous trend, and we have to get off of it.

We had a talk about that in the last election. The American people were engaged in that. They weren't happy with their Congress. They didn't think Congress was managing their affairs very well. They believed they weren't listen-

ing to them when they were asking questions such as: How can you keep doing this? You are putting our grandchildren in the poorhouse. You are risking the economy of the United States. All you want to do is spend money, buy votes, and say you are spreading the wealth around and that is going to make things better.

So we had an election, and it was a shellacking for the big spenders. Wasn't that what it was all about? Was there a single candidate I know of who won last time—at least a new candidate who was elected for the first time—who didn't talk about the need to constrain spending in Washington? That was the theme throughout the election. That was the meaning of the election.

So now my colleagues are saying: Oh, we can't. Oh, you want to cut spending? Oh, they say, they have these extremists in the House. Oh, they do not want to play ball. They haven't served in the Congress long enough. They do not know better. They think we can actually cut spending. Of course, we can't cut spending. Oh, that is not the way you do it. No, you just reduce growth a little bit and spending and say you are cutting spending, even though it is still going up. That is what has been going on here. That is why we are increasing the debt at the most extraordinary rate and over a systemic period of time to the degree that every economist who has appeared before the Budget Committee—and I am the ranking Republican on that committee—has testified that we have to stop; that this is unsustainable—unsustainable. They have said: You cannot keep doing this.

Do you know, colleagues, that in the last 2 years, when the Democratic majority in this Senate had 60 votes, that spending for nondefense discretionary spending, not counting the stimulus, just the basic budgetary spending on all our accounts—nonwar, nondefense, nonSocial Security—went up 24 percent? This at a time when we are running the biggest deficits in history; 24 percent increases? We can't cut spending?

There was an article in the Washington Times yesterday or the day before where my colleague, Senator SHELBY from Alabama, asked the Secretary of Education how he could explain that the Secretary of Education and the President were proposing the Department of Education get a 13½-percent increase for the next fiscal year, beginning October 1—13½ percent. But he defended that. He said it was justified; that it was an investment.

But when you don't have money, you have to change business. You can't continue to be in denial and pretend this is normal; that we can just continue to increase the Education Department by 13.5 percent.

By the way, the Department of Energy, the President, and their Secretary of Defense proposes a 9.5-percent increase for the Department of Energy,

which does more to restrict the production of energy than produce the source of energy in America; the Department of State, 10.5 percent. I am talking about their proposal for next year, beginning October 1 of this year, the fiscal year. Sixty percent they propose for transportation, and they propose a tax for that but will not say what it is. When I asked, they will not say it is a gas tax because that is not popular.

So I asked Secretary LaHood. So it is a not-gas-tax tax. Is that right, Mr. Secretary? Well, we will talk with Congress about what that tax is. But I can just tell you, Mr. LaHood, Congress is not going to pass a big fat tax so you can increase spending on your budget 60 percent because we don't have that kind of money. We don't need to be hammering this fragile economy with another big tax increase. Besides, what we need to do first and foremost is rein in this surging spending spree we have been on. That is what we need to do. That is just a fact. That is what the American people understand.

I am offended, frankly, by the suggestion that the people in the House, who swept out a lot of the buddies of the big spenders in the Senate—a lot of the big spenders in the House are back home figuratively pushing up daisies because they were held to account, finally, many of them, after many years in the Congress. They were voted out of office. So the people who beat them are extremists, you see. That is what they like to say: They will not negotiate. They will not deal. They are irresponsible. They actually think they can come up here and change the trajectory of debt in this country.

So they passed a budget in the House of Representatives. A brilliant, fine, young Congressman, PAUL RYAN, chairman of the Budget Committee in the House, the Republican majority in the House passed a budget that cut spending \$5 trillion, and it would change the debt trajectory of America. It didn't quite pass, even at 10 years that I would like to have seen, but we are in such a hole it is hard to get out, and it would have made a big change in the way we are going and put us on the right path.

Senator REID called it up, mocked it, had his members all vote against it.

So we said: What about your budget, Mr. REID?

Well, we don't have one.

Well, what about your budget? You have the majority in the Senate. You can pass a budget with just 50 votes. Why don't you pass a budget?

It is foolish to pass a budget, he said. Foolish to pass a budget.

At a time when this country has never, ever, ever been in a more serious financial condition than we are today, we are borrowing 42 cents out of every dollar we spend. That is a deep hole, and it is not the war. We spent \$150 billion-plus on the war this year. Next year it will be \$118 billion. The deficit this year will be \$1,500 billion. It is about 10 percent.

If we put every bit of the war costs as part of our debt, it is only 10 percent. It is other spending that is putting us in this hole.

We do have long-term problems with our entitlement programs. Shouldn't we talk about them or should we do as the President did: bring Congressman RYAN over to the White House for a speech, sit him right down there in front of him and then launch into an attack on what he and his Members of the House have tried to do to make America a better place.

So they say: Those new guys and women over there who were elected, they are not reasonable enough. They will not work with us. Well, let me tell you. They proposed a \$6 trillion reduction. Even that didn't balance it in 10 years, but it sure was a big step forward.

Do you know what they have done now. The House passed a bill at the insistence of the Senate and the President to try to pass a bill—and they passed it—that would raise the debt ceiling and cut spending only \$1 trillion. Is that an extremist thing to do? They sent it over here, much of it very similar to what Senator REID has proposed, and they called it up within minutes and tabled it—without debate, without discussion.

Then they continued to say, as if nothing happened: These are extremists over there. They won't listen to reason. These tea party people are not good for America.

Well, I am going to tell you one thing. The tea party people understand an important fact. This Congress is spending too much money. They are exactly correct in that regard.

No Member of the United States Congress can, with a clear conscience, look their constituents in the eye and say we have managed their money wisely. We are in such a shape we can't even see when we will balance the budget because we have mismanaged their economy so badly. The only idea that anybody seems to have around here is, spend more money and stimulate the economy. If we spend more money, where does it come from? It is borrowed. We are already in debt, and every new dime we spend is borrowed.

There is only one way to move out of this; that is, to reduce spending. It just is. The American people understand that.

I recently had the honor to be in Estonia near Russia, one of the Baltic nations that is so proud to be free and independent. When the recession hit, they suffered more than we. They had a 15-percent reduction in their economy. Do you know what they did. The Cabinet members took a 40-percent pay cut. Every employee in Estonia took a 10- to 20-percent pay cut.

One of the members told me: I will tell you who is really mad is my wife. She is a doctor, and the medical system got cut.

Do you know what. They had 5 percent growth the first quarter, and their

debt-to-GDP is 7 percent. Our debt-to-GDP is 95 percent. They are going to come out of this, and they are not going to have a debt so heavy that it pulls down the economy.

Mr. President, I don't know what the agreement timewise is at this point. Can the Chair advise me?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican time has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. I see my colleague from California, and I will yield. I would just note that the idea that the Republicans don't want to vote is not correct. We are prepared to vote. We are prepared to vote on the standard procedural manner in the Senate of 60 votes that is done on every significant matter around here, and that is perfectly normal. I am rather amazed, surprised, and almost amused that my colleagues would feign such great pain and anguish that this would occur. They would do exactly the same. That is the way the Senate operates. That is the way they have operated when they were in the minority, and that is the way we operate today. On matters of significance it takes 60 votes.

Mr. President, I thank the Chair for the opportunity to speak and raise some political points. We have been jousting politically, some of which is good and some of which is not. I do say we need to reach an agreement soon and pass legislation that will raise the debt limit and will reduce our spending trajectory so we can get this country on a sound path.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, my friend, Senator SESSIONS, has said Republicans are prepared to vote on the Reid proposal. Actually, they are not. They want to vote on whether to allow a vote on the Reid proposal. That is what a cloture vote is, and they don't want to vote on the Reid proposal.

We have offered that and said that a majority should rule. Just as the Boehner proposal passed in the House with a simple majority, we want a chance to pass the Reid proposal with a simple majority.

My friend says that is laughable. Why is it laughable? We went back and looked at the RECORD, and every vote we could find on increasing the debt was always done by a simple majority—always.

So if we want to follow tradition, cut out the filibuster. Let's vote, and we will pass the Reid proposal tonight and we can find a way to resolve these problems.

My colleague also said Democrats want to raise taxes. Let me just say something. Democrats want to reduce taxes on the middle class. But we do believe multinational corporations, people who earn over \$1 billion a year and \$1 million a year should pay their fair share. We do believe that.

Senator SANDERS researched and found out that the richest 400 families

in America make more than one-half of America. Can you imagine? The richest 400 families make more than half of America. So those at the top are doing just fine.

So let's be clear. We want an up-or-down vote on the Reid amendment. We think it is fair. We think it is just. We march toward the Republicans. We didn't want to give up on revenues, but we did. We wanted a clean debt ceiling, not holding it hostage to any machinations. We gave that up. We are willing to talk. We are willing to work. Senator REID's office—I was just in there. The door is wide open waiting for Republicans to come in and work with us.

So we hoped at this point we would have an agreement and we could climb down off this manmade crisis. There is no crisis. Eighty-nine times we have raised the debt; no crisis whatsoever. I think it is important that we recognize this is no crisis. We have a challenge to reduce deficits and debt. We did it with Bill Clinton, we balanced the budget, we created surpluses. We know how to do it. We will work with you and do it. But we don't need a manmade crisis to pull this entire economy down, to lower the full faith and credit of the United States.

Imagine holding the full faith and credit of the United States hostage until you get every single thing you want. That is not compromise. That is absolutely irresponsible.

Mr. President, I want to thank you for your leadership in pointing out what is happening on the Senate floor; that there is a filibuster to stop us from voting on the Reid amendment and that we are not going to give up. If, in fact, they decide they want to continue to debate the Reid amendment and they don't give us 60 votes to go to a vote on the Reid amendment, we are going to keep going because the Reid amendment is a fair amendment. It was pulled from both sides of the aisle. It will get us out of this mess that we are in and get us concentrating on the long-term challenges we face: job creation, deficits, and debt reduction.

I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEVIN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, first of all, I appreciate everyone's patience. It is one of the most difficult times we find in the history of our country. There are negotiations going on at the White House now on a solution that will avert the catastrophic default on the Nation's debt. There are many elements to be finalized, and there is still a distance to go before any arrangement can be completed, but I believe we should give everyone as much room as

possible to do their work. I have spoken to the White House quite a few times this evening, and they have asked me to give everyone as much time as possible to reach an agreement if one can be reached. For that reason, we will hold over the vote until tomorrow to give them more time to talk. In fact, we will come in at noon and have the vote at 1 o'clock.

I am glad to see this move toward cooperation and compromise. I hope it bears fruit. I am confident that a final agreement that will adopt the Senate's long-term approach, rather than the short-term bandaid proposed by the House of Representatives, will move forward. There can be no short-term agreement, and I am optimistic there will be no short-term arrangement whatsoever.

I am also confident that reasonable people from both parties should be able to reach an agreement, and I believe we should give them time to do so.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture vote on the Reid motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 627, with amendment No. 589, occur tomorrow, Sunday, July 31, at 1 p.m.; further, that the mandatory quorum call under rule XXII be waived.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THANKING SENATOR LEVIN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, first of all—it will just take a moment, I say to the Presiding Officer—it is not often that we see the distinguished chairman of the Armed Services Committee presiding. I am glad to see you here. You still know how to do it. I would also say just in passing that the State of Michigan is so fortunate to have you, and, frankly, your brother, serving in Congress.

I know there are lots of things people want to talk about tonight, but I think it is worth saying—my friend has heard me say it before—I was making a decision whether I would run for the Senate. I visited the Senator from Michigan in his office. I said: "You know, I came to Washington and served with your brother, SANDER LEVIN." And you said—I will never forget, I have reminded you of it a few times—"Yes, he's my brother but also my best friend." Mr. President, I appreciate who you are and all you have done for our country.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:24 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by

Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1843. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 489 Army Drive in Barrigada, Guam, as the "John Pangelinan Gerber Post Office Building".

H.R. 1975. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 281 East Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena, California, as the "First Lieutenant Oliver Goodall Post Office Building".

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1843. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 489 Army Drive in Barrigada, Guam, as the "John Pangelinan Gerber Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1975. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 281 East Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena, California, as the "First Lieutenant Oliver Goodall Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-2765. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Fokker Services B.V. Model F.28 Mark 0070 and 0100 Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2010-0220)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2766. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; B/E Aerospace, Continuous Flow Passenger Oxygen Mask Assembly, Part Numbers 174006-O, 174080-O, 174085-O, 174095-O, 174097-O, and 174098-O" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2011-0139)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2767. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Model CL-600-2A12 (CL-601) and CL-600-2B16 (CL-601-3A, CL-601-3R, and CL-604 Variants) Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2010-1307)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2768. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; MD Helicopters, Inc. Model MD900 Helicopters" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-