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## REID REMARKS ON SEQUESTER BUDGET CUTS

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Washington, D.C.- Nevada Senator Harry Reid spoke on the Senate floor today regarding the impact of across-the-board sequester budget cuts. Below are his remarks as prepared for delivery:

For months Republicans promised the impacts of the sequester’s arbitrary cuts would be minimal. When they voiced any concern at all about the sequester cuts, it was over the potential impact on the United States military. The effect on middle-class families and on the national economy wouldn’t be that drastic, Republicans promised in February and March.

Well, now it’s April. And contrary to Republican promises, Americans in communities from coast to coast, in red states and blue states, are starting to feel the pinch of these across-the-board cuts.

Right here in Washington, D.C., tourists traveling home from the National Cherry Blossom Festival experienced long lines at airport security because of furloughs.

In Murray, Utah, a food pantry that feeds 1,000 people every month has shuttered its doors because of the cuts.

In Durham, North Carolina, 50 employees at a medical research facility will get pink slips.

In central Maine, fewer senior citizens will get the Meals on Wheels deliveries they rely on.

In Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, 100 children could be kicked off Head Start.

In central Nebraska, emergency response times have increased since the local airport control tower closed.

And in southern Ohio, the director of the local public defender's office - a man by the name of Steve Nolder - decided to lay himself off rather than lay off members of his staff. He has worked for in the public defender's office for 18 years. But he gave up his job so three other people could keep theirs.

But perhaps most concerning of all, community cancer centers around the country are facing a difficult choice: send Medicare patients away or close their doors forever. The Washington Post reports that - because of the sequester's cuts to Medicare reimbursements - cancer centers can no longer afford to administer many common drugs. These clinics - where two-thirds of cancer patients receive treatment - would lose so much money so quickly they would go out of business. So providers are sending cancer patients to overcrowded hospitals instead.

And for patients in clinical trials for new cancer drugs, the situation is truly dire. Some patients involved in clinical trials will have to travel across the country to Boston or Washington, D.C. to get the care they need.

As I said last month, the effects of the so-called sequester didn't break over us like a wave. They snuck up like the rising tide. The effects are devastating, in spite of the delay.

And there is more pain to come. In the coming months, meat inspectors, FBI officers and border patrol agents will be furloughed.

We haven't even begun to see the worst of the job losses. Nationwide, sequester cuts will cost more than 750,000 jobs.

The overwhelming majority of Americans wanted us to compromise before their friends and family members got pink slips or furlough notices. For some, it's already too late. But we can repair the damage done, and put Americans back to work.

To give our economy a foundation for growth, we must replace the sequester with a balanced approach to deficit reduction. Such a balanced approach - one that asks the richest among us to contribute their fair share to deficit reduction - would avert cuts that hurt American families, harm military readiness and hinder our economic recovery.

But in the House and in the Senate, both Republicans and Democrats voted to impose these cuts. And it will take Republicans and Democrats working together to avert them.

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