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The Entries In
Our Annual
Beautiful Baby
Contest.

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Obama Rejects More Say In Cuts

BY JOSH LEDERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama brushed off a Republican plan Tuesday to give him flexibility to allocate \$85 billion in looming spending cuts, wanting no part of a deal that would force him to choose between the bad and the terrible.

Three days out and no closer to any agreement, both parties sought to saddle the other with the blame for the painful ramification of the across-the-board cuts set to kick in Friday. Obama accused Republicans of steadfastly refusing to compromise, while the top Senate Republican, Mitch McConnell, chided Obama's effort to "fan the flames of catastrophe."

McConnell and other top Republicans were lining up behind a plan that wouldn't replace the cuts but would give Obama's agency heads, such as incoming Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, greater discretion in distributing the cuts. The idea is that money could be transferred from lower-priority accounts to others that fund air traffic control or meat inspection.

But Obama, appearing at a Virginia shipbuilding site that he said would sit idle should the cuts go through, rejected the idea, saying there's no smart way to cut such a large chunk from the budget over just seven months — the amount of time left in the fiscal year.

"You don't want to have to



Obama

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Senate Confirms Hagel

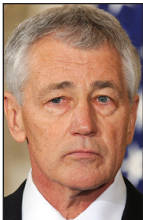
Former Neb. Senator Finally Approved

BY DONNA CASSATA
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A deeply divided Senate voted on Tuesday to confirm Republican Chuck Hagel to be the nation's next defense secretary, handing President Barack Obama's pick the top Pentagon job just days before billions of dollars in automatic, across-the-board budget cuts hit the military.

The vote was 58-41, with four Republicans joining the Democrats in backing the contentious choice. Hagel's only GOP support came from former colleagues Thad Cochran of Mississippi, Dick Shelby of Alabama and Mike Johanns of Nebraska — all three had announced their support earlier — and Rand Paul of Kentucky.

The vote came just hours after Republicans dropped their unprecedented



Hagel

delay of a Pentagon choice and allowed the nomination to move forward on a 71-27 vote. Hagel, 66, a former two-term Nebraska senator and twice-wounded Vietnam combat veteran, succeeds Defense Secretary Leon Panetta. Hagel is expected to be sworn in at the Pentagon on Wednesday. Obama welcomed the bipartisan Senate vote, although 41 Republicans op-

posed his nominee, and said in a statement that "we will have the defense secretary our nation needs and the leader our troops deserve."

The president looked past the divisions and said he was grateful to Hagel "for reminding us that when it comes to our national defense, we are not Democrats or Republicans, we are Americans, and our greatest responsibility is the security of the American people."

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LOSING A PLAIN-SPOKEN FRIEND



Longtime Yankton city attorney James Goetz is shown speaking with Charlie Gross, left, and Charles "Murph" Murphy during Goetz's retirement open house in 2009. Goetz passed away last Friday at age 86. He served as the city attorney for 48 years.

Yankton Attorney Remembered As Humble, Good Citizen

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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When you asked James "Jim" Goetz a question, you could expect a direct answer.

During a law career that spanned more than 60 years, he used a natural inclination for few words to his advantage. "I always thought there was a time to speak and a time to keep my mouth shut and stay out of issues," Goetz told the *Press & Dakotan* in 2009 as he was ending a 48-year tenure as the City of Yankton's attorney. "That was always my philosophy."

That approach carried over into his personal life. "Even with his kids, he would let us make our own mistakes," said his daughter Deborah Beckmann. "He wasn't constantly going to tell you to do this or that. He wasn't going to interject unless he needed to."

Goetz, 86, died Friday at the Avera Sister James Care Center. He practiced law until last June.

The word that best described Goetz is "humble," according to his children.

"He was a very simple man. He didn't try to impress anybody," said James Goetz Jr. "He did everything for every-

body else but nothing for himself."

Goetz had a lighter side, too.

"Even though he was a very reserved man, he had an excellent sense of humor," said his daughter Nancy Corcoran. "He liked to play practical jokes."

The son of a hardware store owner in Hartington, Neb., Goetz graduated from Creighton University in Omaha, Neb., with a law degree at age 22. He then came to Yankton to begin his practice.

When John Blackburn struck out as a young lawyer, Goetz hired him on at his firm.

"I worked with Jim for the first eight years," Blackburn said. "Jim was a good guy to me. He was a fine person and a good citizen."

Being a good citizen was important to Goetz, according to his children.

"He loved giving back to the community and supporting local businesses," Beckmann said.

Goetz said in 2009 that the desire to help Yankton was part of the reason he attended to its legal affairs for so long.

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‘FOR WHICH IT STANDS’

These Beadle Elementary School students sing to the directions of student vocal teacher Kiley Coyne during the school's spring concert Tuesday night at the YHS/Summit Activities Center theatre. Beadle students from grades 4-5 presented the program "For Which It Stands," a patriotic celebration of America's national treasures. To see or purchase images from this event, visit spotted.yankton.net. (Kelly Hertz/P&D)



South Dakota Panel Endorses Phone Ban For Young Drivers

BY CHET BROKAW
Associated Press

PIERRE — A measure that prohibits beginning drivers from using cellphones or other electronic devices until they get unrestricted licenses at age 16 passed through a South Dakota House committee Tuesday.

But the Transportation Committee rejected a bill that would have required beginning drivers to wait longer before driving unaccompanied by adults after lawmakers said it would inconvenience parents.

The panel considered four bills recommended by a task force set up by the Legislature two years ago to find ways to reduce teen traffic rates and fatalities. All four measures were approved earlier by the Senate, but the House panel killed the measure seeking a longer training period for beginning drivers and a plan to limit the number of unrelated passengers in a vehicle driven by a teen with a restricted permit.

Sen. Craig Tieszen, R-Rapid City, chairman of

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