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House of Representatives

The House met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 4, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JEFF DENHAM to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE SERGEANT AT ARMS OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Sergeant at Arms of the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
OFFICE OF THE SERGEANT AT ARMS,
Washington, DC, March 2, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER, As you are aware, the time previously appointed for the next meeting of the House is noon on Monday March 3, 2014. This is to notify you, pursuant to clause 12(c) of rule I, of an imminent impairment of the place of reconvening at that time. The impairment is due to the weather.

Sincerely,

PAUL D. IRVING,
Sergeant at Arms.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 12(c) of rule I, the Speaker established this time for reconvening and notified Members accordingly.

PRAYER

Reverend Harvey Peters, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, by whose goodness we live and move and have our being, and to whom we regularly swear allegiance in pursuit of life, liberty, and justice for all, we turn to You and humbly ask You to hear our prayers.

We are privileged to exercise our civil freedoms and make decisions that reflect the high ideals of our Nation's Founders and the aspirations embedded in our history.

Protect us from delusions or discouragement in the demanding business of governance.

Make us keenly aware we are not alone, and beckoned or not, O God, You are always present as we discern how best to fulfill our high calling with honor.

Keep us mindful of Your presence through those who labor at our side, and on our behalf; those who daily share the joys and burdens of our calling to public service, our families, our staff, our colleagues, and a host of people who continue to pray and hope for the success of our best efforts.

For them and to You, Lord God, we offer our thanks today and always.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WALZ led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

WELCOMING REVEREND HARVEY PETERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. PETERS of California. Mr. Speaker, today I have the distinct honor of introducing the guest chaplain for the opening prayer, my father, Pastor Harvey Peters.

Harvey Peters is a retired Lutheran minister whose service in a nearly 40-year career included stops in Michigan, New Jersey, New Mexico, Wisconsin, and all the way to California.

While I was a kid, he was an active leader in the movement to desegregate housing in the Detroit suburbs, an effort that, while unpopular among some of our neighbors, instilled in me and my three sisters the values of courage, integrity, and equality that I have tried to carry into my own service.

While my dad ran the congregation, my mom, RuthAnn, who is in attendance today, ran the family and worked part time as the church secretary.

It is an honor to welcome Harvey Peters, a longtime advocate for civil rights and the poor, a community leader, and dedicated father and grandfather, to the United States House of Representatives today to give the opening prayer.

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NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, we will finally vote on the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

Times are still tough for many hardworking families. Federal agencies like FEMA should not be in the business of making things tougher. Yet that is exactly what FEMA's callous and impractical administration of the National Flood Insurance Program is doing. Homeowners in south Florida, and throughout our Nation, cannot afford the astronomically increased insurance premiums forced on them by FEMA.

Without action to correct this agency's abuse, many family budgets that are already at the breaking point will fall apart.

Although I support passage of this vital bill today to protect our families and the American Dream of homeownership, we absolutely must do more to help bring premiums down.

CELEBRATING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT, VFW POST 308

(Ms. ESTY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and congratulate VFW Post 308 in Newtown, Connecticut, which celebrated its 75th anniversary this past Sunday.

Since 1939, the members of Post 308 have demonstrated a remarkable commitment to civic engagement and community service in everything they do, whether it is assisting tornado victims in Oklahoma, providing college scholarships to deserving high school graduates, or supporting families affected by the tragic shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School in their hometown.

The men and women of Post 308 serve their community, their State, and their country with distinction. I congratulate Post 308 on celebrating this milestone.

THE GROWING INEQUALITY IN THIS COUNTRY

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today the Federal Register is four times larger than it was in 1970.

This weekend, columnist Peggy Noonan captured the feeling among everyday Americans:

> Voters and taxpayers feel bullied, burdened and jerked around which, again, is not new, but feels more intense every day. Rules, regulations, many of them stupid, from all the agencies, local, State, Federal, on the building of a house or the starting of a business. You can only employ so many before the new insurance rules kick in, so don't employ too many. Don't take a chance, which means don't grow.

Mr. Speaker, there is growing inequality in this country, between regulators and the regulated, between large businesses wielding government influence and smaller competitors attempting to grow, between established corporations with compliance departments and upstarts with energy and ideas.

This status inequality demands our attention. Last week's bipartisan passage of the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act is a good start, but much more must be done.

OUR VETERANS DESERVE OUR HELP

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, transitioning from military to civilian life can be challenging for our veterans. The skill sets learned while serving in the Armed Forces are highly valued, and competence is extraordinary of veterans, who have a proven work ethic.

With record unemployment, we need to work together for jobs. Yesterday, the office of the Second Congressional District conducted a veterans job fair, thoughtfully hosted by the Aiken Shrine Club, to support our brave men and women who have faithfully served our country.

The event was to better connect our veterans with the resources available to them. I am very thankful for the local businesses, schools, government agencies, and veterans organizations that were on hand to offer assistance.

As the son of a veteran, as a retired member of the South Carolina National Guard, and being the very grateful father of four sons currently serving in the military, I appreciate our veterans' dedication to protect our freedoms. It is my hope this veterans job fair will prove beneficial and recognize the service of our heroes.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Our hopes and prayers are for the people of Ukraine.

OPPOSING THE ACA'S CUTS TO MEDICARE ADVANTAGE

(Mr. BILIRAKIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of health care choices for our seniors.

Nearly 30 percent of all seniors, 15 million Americans, choose Medicare Advantage. Individuals have testified before the Energy and Commerce Committee that Medicare Advantage provides better results than traditional Medicare by embracing free-market principles.

Medicare Advantage focuses on preventive care. Before ObamaCare, competition in Medicare Advantage kept costs for beneficiaries low and choices for plans abundant. With ObamaCare, choices will be reduced and costs for seniors, unfortunately, will increase.

ObamaCare cuts Medicare by $700 billion. Medicare Advantage has been successful for its enrollees. These cuts will reduce the access seniors have to Medicare Advantage. This is unacceptable as far as I am concerned.

Medicare Advantage should be touted. Instead, seniors are facing an on-average 13 percent rate cut in 2014, compared to 2013. We should not be penalizing seniors and reducing their access to health care to pay for others.

Medicare Advantage is a successful program, and Congress should protect it from being gutted by the Obama administration and the Affordable Care Act.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
Washington, DC, February 28, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, The Capitol, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on February 28, 2014, at 2:31 p.m., and said to contain a message from the President whereby he notifies the Congress he has extended the national emergency with respect to Zimbabwe, declared in Executive 13288 of March 6, 2003.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO ZIMBABWE—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 113–94)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive

Order 13288 of March 6, 2003, with respect to the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2014.

The threat constituted by the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions has not been resolved. These actions and policies continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue this national emergency and to maintain in force the sanctions to respond to this threat.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *February 28, 2014*.

□ 1415

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

HOME HEATING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE THROUGH TRANSPORTATION ACT OF 2014

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4076) to address shortages and interruptions in the availability of propane and other home heating fuels in the United States, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4076

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Home Heating Emergency Assistance Through Transportation Act of 2014'' or the ''HHEATT Act of 2014''.

SEC. 2. PROPANE AND HOME HEATING FUEL EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a covered emergency exemption issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration shall remain in effect until May 31, 2014, unless the Secretary of Transportation, after consultation with the Governors of affected States, determines that the emergency for which the exemption was provided ends before that date.

(b) COVERED EMERGENCY EXEMPTION DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''covered emergency exemption'' means an exemption issued under section 390.23 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, or extended under section 390.25 of such title that—

(1) was issued or extended during the period beginning on February 5, 2014, and ending on the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) provided regulatory relief for commercial motor vehicle operations providing direct assistance supporting the delivery of propane and home heating fuels.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in subsection (a) may be construed to prohibit the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration from issuing or extending a covered emergency exemption beyond May 31, 2014, under other Federal law.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 4076.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I was proud to introduce H.R. 4076, the Home Heating Emergency Assistance Through Transportation Act of 2014. This bipartisan legislation will provide relief for millions of Americans suffering from the current propane and home heating fuel emergency.

An exceptionally cold winter has increased demand for propane, which is used for heating approximately 12 million homes in the United States, and for other home-heating fuels. In my district, more than 9,000 households rely on propane for home heating; and across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, there are more than 200,000 households that do the same.

So according to the National Propane Gas Association, supplies are expected to remain tight through the end of the winter because the infrastructure to deliver propane to high-demand areas is insufficient.

On February 5, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration issued a temporary emergency declaration to allow tank truck operators delivering propane and other home heating fuels to drive longer hours in order to speed up deliveries to the affected States. However, these emergency declarations can only last 30 days at a time, creating great uncertainty and limited relief.

Extreme weather conditions are not expected to subside any time soon, threatening the lives and livelihoods of those with homes, farms, and businesses that depend on heat from propane and other home heating fuels. Just yesterday, we saw another severe winter storm.

H.R. 4076 provides a guaranteed extension of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's emergency declaration until May 31, 2014. This certainty is required to address the transportation distribution issues to give much needed relief to the affected States.

Should the crisis subside prior to May 31, 2014, the Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with the Governors of the affected States, can determine that the guaranteed extension is no longer needed.

I would like to thank the National Propane Gas Association and the New England Fuel Institute for supporting this legislation. I will be entering their letters of support into the RECORD.

This bill has strong bipartisan support, and I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 4076.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

NPGA,
February 25, 2014.

Hon. BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHUSTER, On behalf of The National Propane Gas Association (NPGA), I write to share our strong support for your legislation, H.R. 4076, the Home Heating Emergency Assistance Through Transportation (HHEATT) Act of 2014.

NPGA is the national trade association of the propane industry, having a membership of about 3,000 companies, with 39 state and regional associations representing members in all 50 states. The single largest group of NPGA members is retail marketers of propane gas who deliver the fuel to the end user for space heating, water heating and agricultural crop drying, among other applications. NPGA membership also includes propane producers, transporters and wholesalers, as well as manufacturers and distributors of associated equipment and containers. While NPGA's membership covers a broad cross-section of categories, more than 90 percent are designated as small businesses.

As you know, this winter Americans have faced severe supply disruptions in many areas of the country. A convergence of conditions—late wet grain harvest, closed pipeline infrastructure, limited railcars due to alternate service demands—have caused difficulties in delivering propane to consumers during one of the most extreme winters on record.

While the overall supply of propane in the United States is sufficient to meet demand, the propane industry is facing challenges with distribution and transportation. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the U.S. has more than 42 million barrels of propane presently in stock, located predominantly in Mont Belvieu, Texas, where the largest propane storage facility in the world is located. Overcoming the distribution challenges has been most greatly alleviated by temporary emergency declarations issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Administration which provide relief from certain federal motor carrier safety regulations for the Midwest, Eastern, Southern, and portions of the Western Service Centers. Unfortunately, these emergency declarations can only last 30 days at a time which creates uncertainty for our propane suppliers and distributors.

Chairman Shuster, we thank you for your leadership on this bill, and trust Congress will take swift action to pass this important regulatory relief. Thank you.

Sincerely,

RICHARD ROLDAN,
President & Chief Executive Officer, National Propane Gas Association.

NEFI
February 28, 2014.

Hon. BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHUSTER: We commend you for the introduction of the Home Heating Emergency Assistance through Transportation or ''HHEATT'' Act (H.R. 4076) and are writing to endorse this important legislation.

The New England Fuel Institute (NEFI) is the nation's largest independent trade association representing the retail home heating oil industry. Our membership includes more than 1,000 mostly small business home heating oil and Bioheat® dealers and related services companies. Many NEFI members also deliver propane and other home heating fuels and retain nearly around-the-clock drivers and service technicians ready to make emergency fuel deliveries or service home heating systems in the event of an outage.

The severely inclement weather we have experienced this winter has resulted in high residential consumption rates for heating oil. As a result, heating oil dealers are increasingly challenged to resupply customer tanks without interruption and have been in need of waivers from certain regulations such as federal hours-of-service requirements. Emergency declarations issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) help to provide this relief so that heating fuel distributors can move product to where it is needed and expedite deliveries to homes and businesses.

Unfortunately, these declarations are limited to 30 days. This can create uncertainty during extended emergencies such as the long stretch of extreme cold and snowy weather we are currently experiencing. The HHEATT Act would provide added relief and certainty by guaranteeing an extension of emergency declarations through May 31, 2014. The U.S. Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with state Governors, may terminate the guaranteed extension before May 31st only if current emergencies subside.

This bill would provide much needed relief to our member companies and their consumers. We hope for its immediate passage and enactment. Again, thank you for your hard work in this regard.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL C. TRUNZO,
President & CEO.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 4076, a commonsense bill. I would also like to thank the chairman for always striking the proper balance between safety and the smooth operation of commerce, and the gentleman explained it very clearly.

For many of us, especially in rural areas of the Midwest, propane is the fuel of choice for heating their homes, and to get an idea of what happened here, regular folks on a regular budget would spend about $600 to fill up their tank during the winter.

They got a refill, got a bill, and saw that it was over $1,900 in some cases. The shock to them was one thing; but then the situation, as the gentleman so clearly stated, was exacerbated by the inability to deliver when we needed it.

And propane, while there are many factors at work here, is not like other commodities in terms of—it is not a nice-to-have thing. It is a necessity.

So the chairman's bill, this bipartisan piece of legislation addresses one of the issues here, making sure we have the trucks on the road to deliver the propane, making sure the supply is enough to start making sure these things are filled until the end of winter, and doing so in a safe manner.

I want to applaud the folks over at the FMCA that did do what they needed to do in issuing some of the waivers, but the gentleman is exactly right. A 30-day waiver is not long enough. Winter is still deep in the Midwest, and we don't need to have the waiver expire on March 15, go through it again, and have the uncertainty.

So this piece of legislation simply does as the gentleman stated. It allows an exemption without sacrificing safety to allow for the movement of propane into the markets where it is most needed, specifically the rural Midwest.

These trucks are coming from Texas. It keeps the people on the roads. It keeps the trucks running. It keeps the propane tanks full, as those things start to happen and the market starts to stabilize a little bit, and the prices will come down.

I do think the gentleman hit on a bigger point here. The infrastructure for the delivery of propane is something we need to look at. This is a short-term emergency measure that will address the problem this winter. We need to look further down the road on some of the long-term solutions on this.

So I encourage my colleagues to support this commonsense piece of legislation, support it for all the right reasons, and then join together as we move forward to look at some long-term solutions.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SHUSTER. First, I want to thank the gentleman from Minnesota for his kind remarks. I appreciate it greatly and look forward to continue working together with you on many other legislative endeavors.

With that, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO).

Mrs. CAPITO. I thank the chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for his solid work on this, his bipartisan work, as the gentleman from Minnesota mentioned.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Home Heating Emergency Assistance Through Transportation Act, H.R. 4076, which is a short-term, commonsense measure.

This long winter has really hit a lot of families in their wallets and on their budgets, and a shortage of propane has made the cost of home heating even worse for many West Virginians and residents in our surrounding States.

More than 31,000 West Virginia households rely on propane for their heating. More than two-thirds of the propane sold in West Virginia is for residential use, meaning that high prices have a direct impact on our family budgets.

Local suppliers have been forced to short-fill their customers' tanks in order to spread the limited supply of propane among customers in need. Today's legislation will allow these suppliers to operate more efficiently through this spring, allowing them to make more frequent deliveries, and ensure that their customers have an adequate and affordable supply of propane to get them through the rest of the winter.

This bill is the first of five separate pieces of energy legislation the House will consider this week, all having one common thread, to make sure American families have access to affordable and reliable supplies of electricity and heating fuel.

I urge my colleagues to support the HHEATT Act and the other energy bills on the floor this week.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHUSTER. I now yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN), an important new member of the committee and someone who really knows about infrastructure firsthand because he actually builds it out there in Oklahoma.

Mr. MULLIN. I thank the chairman for this opportunity to speak on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today out of concern for thousands of Americans struggling to heat their homes this winter. The bitter cold has caused an unwelcome rise in heating costs that has resulted in smaller paychecks and financial strain for individuals and organizations across Oklahoma's Second District.

Money is not going as far, especially among low-income families that already find themselves under tight budgets.

Areas that are in dire need of propane to heat their homes are left out in the cold—literally—due to a lack of adequate infrastructure. It is critical that we pass today's HHEATT Act to ensure the issues with heating fuel transportation and distribution are resolved and that relief is finally available.

Fuel costs aren't just numbers on a page. They are factors that critically impact our neighbors, our families, and our friends. The fact is we have a responsibility to maintain our Nation's public safety.

I urge my colleagues to remember your fellow Americans today and help pass this commonsense solution that will provide certainty and will quickly address a critical need.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I will continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHUSTER. I now yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this act. It is really just common sense, is it not? And I think it

best exemplifies how America handles crises. They adjust. They make an adjustment.

This certainly could be called a heated debate because we are trying to make sure that our constituents have that ability, to heat their homes during one of the longest winters. We don't use the term ''polar vortex'' back in Pennsylvania. We just call it winter.

It has been a long, long winter, and we are looking at the adjustment that would take place. It is just about transportation. It is about allowing these people that deliver this energy, this propane to these homes.

In Pennsylvania, we have over 180,000 people who rely on the delivery of this product to keep their homes heated. That is not a difficult thing to understand. I think for this body to be able to just on the run—on the fly, as it were—make sure that our constituents have the ability to heat their homes, this is so fundamentally basic, and it is just common sense.

So I thank the chairman for bringing this bill forward. It makes sense to everybody back where I live, as they bundle up and continue to worry about when spring is finally going to get here.

We are able to release that now, change the transportation laws a bit, just so they can get there, and we are saying let's do it until May 31. Let's not do it the way we are doing it now.

Chances are, by May 31, that crisis will be gone, but the ability to get propane to their homes is very critical right now.

So I thank the chairman and ranking member for what they are doing. We are doing things that make sense for the American people, and every single American citizen benefits from this.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, once again, I thank the chairman for a smart piece of legislation. It is simple. It strikes that proper balance between safety on our roads and a smooth flow of commerce.

This is a matter of life and death. It has been a bitter cold winter, as you have heard. 21 people in Minnesota have died as a direct result of the weather. We have 250,000 people who get their heat from propane. Many of them are in rural areas.

I have been in homes across southern Minnesota. These are folks doing everything right, paying the bills, working hard. If they can afford to get the propane, that is one thing. They simply can't get the propane, in some cases.

So this is one first step. Alleviate the crisis. Do it in a safe manner. Get it out there. Start to balance things out. Then move forward because, as we said, again, keeping stability in the heating oil markets is absolutely critical, and we can get this right.

So with that, I congratulate the chairman. I thank him for bringing this, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I again thank the gentleman from Minnesota for his work on this.

I also thank the original cosponsor on this bill, Mr. RYAN from Ohio, who may be stuck in the snow out there, or maybe it has slowed down his progress to get to Washington; but the gentleman hails from eastern Ohio, right on the Pennsylvania border.

I know that this is going to impact his district, and I was glad that he and I were able to work together on this commonsense piece of legislation that is going to help hundreds of thousands of people—if not millions of people—all up and down these corridors who have had a very, very difficult winter.

I know that, looking at The Weather Channel or one of the weather stations out in Minnesota, they may need propane until the end of May because of the kind of winter they have had up there. There have been very, very, very cold, extreme weather conditions.

Again, H.R. 4076 provides the ability of the Transportation Department to extend this and help with this crisis and, as we have all said here today, strong bipartisan support; so I would urge all my colleagues today to vote on H.R. 4076.

I now yield 2 minutes to another gentleman from northwestern Ohio (Mr. LATTA).

Mr. LATTA. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very important issue not only to northwest Ohio, but to the entire Midwest, so I rise today in support of H.R. 4076, the Home Heating Emergency Assistance Through Transportation Act. This legislation will ensure the trucks carrying emergency supplies of propane can be delivered to communities most in need as fast as possible.

My constituents have been at the forefront of the shortage, as many rely on propane to heat their homes and maintain important farming operations. In the face of extreme winter weather, with prolonged periods of negative degree temperatures, access to heat is not a product of comfort, but is a requirement for survival.

Further frustrating is the resulting high prices that are putting pressure on already strained family budgets. While many supply companies are urging customers to take voluntary conservation measures, many families living in my district don't have the option of reducing home heat.

Last Friday when I did get home, I found this letter in my mailbox from a constituent I have known for my entire life. The letter was written by the wife explaining the situation. Her husband, who is almost 96 years old, needs to have their home warmer this winter since he is on a blood thinner.

During the last couple of weeks, they have kept their thermostat at 69 degrees. He has been fully dressed with a hat, gloves, bathrobe, and blankets while at their home. She explains in the letter that they have not had many pleasant days, but they have made it through it.

Another constituent is a young mother with children at home and one on the way. She cannot keep their home colder, even though it would help save on their next energy bill.

Finally, a small business owner who delivers propane to customers in northwest Ohio has been working day and night to find enough propane to ensure his customers can heat their homes.

□ 1430

In cases where he simply cannot provide enough propane, he has distributed plug-in electric heaters. These actions will keep them warm but will not help when they receive their next energy bill.

These are just a few examples of what is happening throughout the Midwest. The propane shortage has created a very serious crisis that is impacting the most vulnerable members of our society. H.R. 4076 is a step towards providing short-term relief to the communities, families, and small business owners most in need.

I thank the chairman for his leadership on this legislation, and I support the legislation.

Mr. SHUSTER. I thank the gentleman from Ohio and encourage all Members to support H.R. 4076, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4076, the HHEATT Act, that would allow propane to expeditiously move across our country and be delivered to the hundreds of thousands of people who rely on this resource to heat their homes.

It is estimated that 250,000 people in my home state of Wisconsin rely on propane to heat their homes. Today, the temperature in my hometown of Fond du Lac is 11 degrees, with a high of 20 and a low of 6 degrees. The wind chill brings these temperatures down to the single digits and below zero. This is the way it's been for much of the winter during this exceptionally cold winter.

Don't get me wrong, I'm from Wisconsin, we're used to the cold.

But when you get home from work and you are unable to afford or even obtain the propane needed to heat your home, we have a serious problem. There are many factors that have contributed to the propane shortage we're now facing, and I am not here to list them all.

My home state of Wisconsin and the utility companies that serve us have been going to great lengths to assist those who are running low on propane and seek out additional supplies as far south as Texas to get them to the people that need them.

The U.S. Department of Transportation has temporarily suspended hours-of-service regulations for truck drivers carrying propane so supplies can make it where they need to go in an expedited manner. But these suspensions han been renewed in 30 day increments.

Mr. Speaker, this bill simply continues the emergency suspension of federal hours-of-service requirements for truck drivers carrying propane through the end of May. It allows the transportation of propane to continue uninterrupted by federal rules that could literally be the difference between someone sleeping in a house with heat or without it. We are making progress in resolving this shortage, but this legislation would provide certainty for thousands in my district through the rest of the

cold season that they will be able to receive this valuable resource to heat their home.

I thank my colleague and Transportation Committee Chairman BILL SHUSTER for introducing this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support its passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4076.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING THE PEOPLE OF VENEZUELA AS THEY PROTEST PEACEFULLY FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 488) supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democratic change and calling to end the violence, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 488

Whereas the United States Government should support the rule of law, and free and peaceful exercise of representative democracy in Venezuela, condemning violence and intimidation against the country's political opposition, and calling for dialogue between all political actors in the country;

Whereas, on February 12, 2014, also known in Venezuela as the National Youth Day, students began protesting in several cities Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro's inability to stem violent crime, his undemocratic actions, and a rapidly deteriorating economy marked by high inflation and shortages of consumer goods;

Whereas, on February 12, 2014, a judge issued an arrest warrant for Leopoldo López, leader of the opposition party Voluntad Popular, for unfounded allegations in connection with the student protests;

Whereas, on February 17, 2014, the Government of Venezuela notified the United States Department of State that it had declared 3 consular officers at the United States Embassy in Venezuela personae non gratae;

Whereas over the last year, the Government of Venezuela has expelled a total of 8 United States Government officials from Venezuela;

Whereas, on February 18, 2014, opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez turned himself in to Venezuelan authorities, was arrested, and charged with criminal incitement, conspiracy, arson, and intent to damage property;

Whereas Leopoldo Lopez is currently being held in a prison at a military facility;

Whereas nongovernmental human rights organizations have alleged that the charges brought against Venezuelan opposition leader Leopoldo López appear to be a politically motivated attempt to silence dissent in the country;

Whereas the Venezuelan Government has blocked users' online images as opposition groups marched through Caracas;

Whereas the Venezuelan people have been protesting economic, social, and political concerns facing their country, including corruption, rising inflation rates, shortages of everyday products, increasing crime rates, and the erosion of human rights and respect for political dissent;

Whereas, on February 19, 2014, President Barack Obama criticized the Venezuelan Government for arresting protesters, called for their release, and urged the government to focus on the ''legitimate grievances of the Venezuelan people'';

Whereas, as of February 26, 2014, there have been 14 people killed, over 100 injured, and many persons unjustly detained in relation to pro-democracy demonstrations throughout Venezuela;

Whereas Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro threatened to expel the United States news network CNN from Venezuela and has taken off the air the Colombian news channel NTN 24, which transmits in Venezuela, after news outlets reported on the nation-wide protests;

Whereas the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights released a statement on February 14, 2014, which ''expresses its concern over the serious incidents of violence that have taken place in the context of protest demonstrations in Venezuela, as well as other complaints concerning acts of censorship against media outlets, attacks on organizations that defend human rights, and acts of alleged political persecution''; and

Whereas as a member of the Organization of American States and signatory to the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the Government of Venezuela has agreed to abide by the principles of constitutional, representative democracy, which include free and fair elections and adherence to its own constitution: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the people of Venezuela in their pursuit of freedom of expression and freedom of assembly to promote democratic principles in Venezuela;

(2) deplores acts which constitute a disregard for the rule of law, the inexcusable violence perpetrated against opposition leaders and protesters in Venezuela, and the growing efforts to use politically motivated criminal charges to intimidate the country's political opposition;

(3) urges responsible nations throughout the international community to stand in solidarity with the people of Venezuela and to actively encourage a process of dialogue between the Government of Venezuela and the political opposition to end the violence;

(4) urges the United States Department of State to work in concert with other countries in the Americas to take meaningful steps to ensure that basic fundamental freedoms in Venezuela are in accordance with the Inter-American Democratic Charter and to strengthen the ability of the Organization of American States (OAS) to respond to the erosion of democratic norms and institutions in Venezuela;

(5) urges the Organization of American States and its Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to utilize its good offices and all mechanisms at its disposal to seek the most effective way to expeditiously end the violence in Venezuela in accordance with the Inter-American Democratic Charter; and

(6) supports efforts by international and multilateral organizations to urge the Venezuelan Government to adopt measures to guarantee the rights to life, humane treatment, and security, and the political freedoms of assembly, association, and expression to all of the people of Venezuela.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 488 signals U.S. support for the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democracy in the face of Nicolas Maduro's violent repression and his crackdown on those who express their opposition to his regime's failed policies.

We must take a clear stand because the Maduro regime has responded in a deeply undemocratic manner by forcibly repressing protesters, attempting to silence critics by blocking media outlets, and even authorizing the arrests of key opposition leaders such as Leopoldo Lopez.

As protests have swelled throughout the country, the actions of regime forces have led to the deaths of at least 15 and to the unjust detention of more than 100 freedom seekers.

It is incumbent upon the Organization of American States, the OAS, to act according to the principles of its Inter-American Democratic Charter and address this crisis of democracy. Yet recent history has shown us that the Secretary General of the OAS will not lead the way in this important effort. Thus, in the absence of his leadership, responsible nations in the hemisphere must act. They cannot remain silent.

The Panamanians have stepped up to the plate. They have proposed a ministerial meeting at the OAS, but regrettably, Mr. Speaker, that proposal has not moved forward. This resolution will send a clear message to the OAS and to Nicolas Maduro that the United States condemns these undemocratic actions.

We see the plight of the people of Venezuela, and we stand on their side in the struggle for democratic change. We stand together with the Women for Life, Mujeres por la Vida, who march clad in white through the streets of Venezuela peacefully, like their companions in the struggle for freedom in Cuba—Las Damas de Blanco, the Ladies in White.

We stand with the students who take to the streets demanding the release of their fellow students who have been unjustly detained, only to be met with the clubs and the teargas of Maduro's henchmen. And we stand together, Mr. Speaker, united with the people of Venezuela who wish to cast the yoke of repression and oppression and the influence of the Castro regime, which has

been more than eager to help Maduro silence the oppression in Venezuela because it fears that the movement will sweep over the island of Cuba.

We must stand together and support those who seek freedom: freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, and the freedom from government abuse and government oppression. We must speak with a unified voice, Mr. Speaker, about the crisis of democracy in Venezuela and stand in solidarity with the Venezuelan people in their spirited struggle.

But in the face of a determined autocrat who disregards expectations of right conduct and who is willing to use violence to impose his will on free citizens, well, Mr. Speaker, words are just not nearly enough. We must act, and we must act now. We must support those who are pleading for respect for democratic principles and for human rights in Venezuela.

I want to thank the chairman of our important committee, Chairman ROYCE, and my good friend, also, Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL, for getting this measure to the floor so quickly. I also want to thank their exceptional staff. I want to thank Congressmen ALBIO SIRES and MARIO DIAZ-BALART, who have supported this resolution from the very beginning. Mr. Speaker, we have worked closely together in a bipartisan and a bicameral way, including with the State Department, to ensure that this is a strong, bipartisan resolution, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 488, a resolution supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully and calling for an end to recent violence, and I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would first like to recognize my good friend, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN) for offering this important resolution, but more so for her dedication for so many years to these important issues. It has been a pleasure working with her through the years.

The eyes of the world are on Venezuela as President Nicolas Maduro and his security forces crack down on peaceful protesters. It is an absolute tragedy that 17 people have been killed and 261 people have been injured during recent protests throughout the country. It sounds a little bit like Ukraine, doesn't it?

I was particularly disturbed when the government issued an arrest warrant for opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez on trumped-up charges. Mr. Lopez turned himself in on February 18 and is currently being held in a prison at a military facility.

And, by the way, the elections that supposedly elected Mr. Maduro, as far as I am concerned, are in question because there never was a real recount. The ballots were destroyed before there could be a recount.

I am so deeply troubled by the crackdown on press freedom in Venezuela. The Colombian news network NTN24 was recently taken off the air after it broadcast footage of the protests. Journalists from CNN were also threatened with expulsion.

Today's resolution makes it clear that Congress stands with the Venezuelan people and against all acts of violence and undemocratic actions. I am pleased that President Obama and Secretary Kerry have also spoken out forcefully in condemning violence in Venezuela.

Let me be clear. It is not just the United States that has been taking notice of recent events in Venezuela. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights released a statement on February 14 which ''expresses its concern over the serious incidents of violence that have taken place in the context of protest demonstrations in Venezuela, as well as other complaints concerning acts of censorship against media outlets . . . and acts of alleged political persecution.''

Last week, the European Parliament passed a resolution calling on the Venezuelan Government to release jailed opposition members and protesters and to end the violence.

I hope all member states of the OAS, the Organization of American States, will similarly call on the Venezuelan Government to abide by the OAS Convention on Human Rights and the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

Finally, let me say that the only way out of this crisis is through dialogue. Our resolution makes this absolutely clear by encouraging ''a process of dialogue between the Government of Venezuela and the political opposition to end the violence.''

I stand with the people of Venezuela in calling for an end to the senseless violence, and I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 488, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART), our colleague who is on the Appropriations Committee who has been a leader in this fight for freedom and liberty for the Venezuelan people.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this House resolution introduced by my dear friend and one of the great leaders and champions for freedom around the world, Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN. I also want to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL, speaking of folks who believe in freedom and are always looking out for those who are repressed.

For the last several weeks, Mr. Speaker, the people of Venezuela have risen up to protest the corruption, the food shortages, the soaring crime rates, and, most important of all, the increased and alarming repression by the Maduro regime. In response to those legitimate protests—those peaceful protests—the Venezuelan regime has ordered security forces to, frankly, brutally crack down on the opposition.

Since the protests began, Mr. Speaker, more than 500 people have been arrested. Those are the ones that we can document. Approximately 150 have been injured, and more than a dozen—more than a dozen—have been killed.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, but the Maduro regime has instituted something which should not surprise us, a virtual media blackout. They have blocked out images. They tried to block out images over the Internet. They even closed down, in certain parts of the country where they had the ability to do so, parts of the Internet, including Twitter. They have thrown out independent news organizations like CNN and NTN.

Why? Why are they doing this? They are doing this because the Venezuelan people are fed up with the corruption; they are fed up with, as my father would have said, this so-called ''decaffeinated dictatorship.'' And why would he have said a ''decaffeinated dictatorship''? It is a dictatorship that got there, arguably, through democratic means that then has done everything to eliminate all semblance of democracy, all semblance of human rights, all semblance of freedom of the press, and all semblance of the basic institutions of democracy.

And not only that, Mr. Speaker, there are reports of thousands of Cuban special operation forces and also intel forces that are helping the Maduro regime in the crackdown of the Venezuelan people. So at a time when a lot of the so-called international community, particularly in our hemisphere, stays quiet to the reality of the Venezuelan people's struggle for freedom, I am so proud of this Congress—this Congress, this House—that once again is standing with those who are oppressed and standing with those who are struggling for freedom. This is a House that traditionally has done that. This is a House that traditionally, in a bipartisan way, has done that, which is why I am, again, so grateful, particularly to the chairwoman, to my, I would say, younger but wiser sister, Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, to the chairman and to the ranking member; for when others are silent, they are demonstrating that the United States House of Representatives will not stay silent. We will continue to support the Venezuelan people. We will stand with the heroic Venezuelan people, those students who have hit the streets demanding their freedom.

I urge every single one of our colleagues to express solidarity with those like over 200 years ago, how people in our country went out and struggled for freedom. Now we see that the Venezuelan young people, that the students, are doing the same thing. How proud of this House, how proud I am to see this House stand with those heroic Venezuelan people, the heirs of Simon Bolivar—los herederos de Bolivar—who

are trying and will succeed in recapturing their sovereignty, their freedom, and their democracy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida will provide the Clerk a translation of his remarks.

□ 1445

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH).

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 488, supporting the Democratic aspirations of the people of Venezuela.

I would like to thank my friend, Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN, for her leadership and for always fighting for democratic principles. I would like to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for working to bring this resolution to the floor.

I strongly condemn the violence used by the Maduro regime: 17 dead and 261 injured in the recent protest. Peaceful assembly should never be met with the use of deadly force. This government has resorted to political intimidation and free media censorship to squash the voices of the people.

I join my colleagues today in support of the people of Venezuela to determine their own political future. It is their democratic right to seek government policies that put their country on a path to democratic and economic prosperity for all Venezuelans.

By passing this resolution, Congress will send a clear message to the people of Venezuela—and to all those around the world struggling to achieve true democracy and freedom—that we stand with you. We support your most democratic rights of free expression and peaceful assembly. Any true democracy must be accountable to its people. We call on the Maduro government to work with the people, not against them, to end the violence, and to find a political resolution.

This resolution, Mr. Speaker, makes clear to the Venezuelan people and to the Maduro regime that the United States stands for freedom and democracy, and that the human rights of the Venezuelan people matter to the American people, and they must be defended. I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased and honored to yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady for yielding to me. I also thank the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), our chairman emeritus, and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) the ranking member, for their working together to craft this bipartisan resolution, a resolution that is focused on supporting Venezuelans, supporting their right to free expression, their right to democracy, their right for those who yearn to return to the rule of law, and, frankly, not just democratic norms, but just the most basic respect for human beings.

In recent weeks, Venezuela has been rocked by nationwide protests against the government of the late Hugo Chavez's hand-picked successor, Nicolas Maduro. I as I watched events unfold on CNN, they began as student protests. Students were going through the streets explaining that they were against rampant street crime, and they wanted the protections of the state rather than the predatory nature of what was happening with these armed gangs. Those protests have since evolved into a referendum on the government's statist policies, their destructive economic policies, the government's near elimination of civil society's freedoms in Venezuela.

Maduro's heavy-handed response, frankly, I think all of us see this now as having really worsened this crisis. We are in a situation now where more than a dozen Venezuelans have been killed, and many students have been grievously wounded. Even more than that have been jailed. The leading opposition figure right now is in prison.

These parliamentary gangs that we talked about that are so predatory, that roam the streets and commit these crimes, now they threaten civilians who are trying to peacefully express opposition. The President of the country has threatened to release, in his words, all of the military force of the country against those who oppose him, against the opposition. Even one sitting governor who had long allied himself with Hugo Chavez was driven to say that the government has gone too far. He took to the radio and said:

> I am against putting down a peaceful protest with weapons.

Precisely. Precisely—and that, of course, is why the international community is concerned and we are concerned here today.

All of this, of course, is taking place in our own Western Hemisphere, just a 3-hour flight from the United States. As a major energy producer positioned along drug trafficking routes, Venezuela's instability harms the interests of all in the Western Hemisphere.

Venezuela once had a strong democratic tradition. We would like to see that democratic tradition returned. We think the right of free expression is an important human right. Speaking out in support of those who share this vision, as we are doing today, I think is an important step in realizing that goal, and that is why I again commend Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN and Ranking Member ENGEL for this resolution that they have brought forward.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 488, and I thank my south Florida colleague and friend, Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN, for her leadership in introducing this measure and giving us an opportunity to stand with the people of Venezuela.

I stand in solidarity with my colleagues and the people of Venezuela to condemn the deplorable, horrific, and inexcusable violence the Maduro regime has perpetrated against its own citizens. Brave activists have taken to the streets in Venezuela to demand basic freedoms from an increasingly repressive government. These are students, lawyers, and average citizens simply asking their government to respect their basic human and democratic rights.

Since his election, President Maduro's economic and political policies have driven Venezuela's economy into the ground. His attempts to silence these outcries have not worked, and they will not work. Despite jailing leading opposition voices and expelling independent media voices, the world is watching and listening, and we still hear the calls loud and clear for democracy, for governance, and reform.

President Maduro's ridiculous accusations about United States involvement in fomenting unrest will prove to be a grossly failed attempt to distract from his own shortcomings in serving his people. We will not allow his rhetoric to try to blame the United States for what is a clear struggle between his repressive policies and the legitimate demands of his people.

My hometown of Weston is often affectionately known as ''Westonzuela.'' Just yesterday, I spoke with community leaders in south Florida—many of them my neighbors, my friends, my constituents—about the fear and horrors that family members and their friends are experiencing.

This resolution calls upon the government of Venezuela to respect the principles enshrined in its own governing documents as well as those in the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights—including freedoms of speech and the press.

This resolution affirms what we know to be true: that the best way to address the legitimate grievances of the people is through genuine dialogue between all parties involved. It calls for our country to work with our partners in the Western Hemisphere and through regional organizations to help facilitate this dialogue and, importantly, to do everything possible to cease this senseless violence and create the space for peace. This resolution reflects that we stand in solidarity with the people of Venezuela.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution can only be the first step to hold Maduro and his fellow regime thugs accountable for their terrible and violent response, and their abuse of Venezuelan people's liberties and human rights.

I have already begun circulating a letter amongst my colleagues in the House addressed to President Obama asking him to take immediate action against Maduro and other Venezuelan officials who are responsible for violations of their people's human rights.

We are calling for the President to enact immediate sanctions against those officials under authorities granted to him under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, including denying them visas to enter the United States, blocking their property, freezing their assets in the U.S., as well as prohibiting them from making any financial transactions in the U.S. This letter already enjoys bipartisan support. I invite my colleagues to join me in signing this letter, and I hope that the President will recognize the severity of this issue and do the right thing and take these important steps.

However, Mr. Speaker, I will file a bill this week that would force the implementation of these sanctions even if the President chooses not to use these authorities granted to him under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act.

Now is not the time to dither or sit on the fence. The United States must stand up for the people of Venezuela and for the American ideals of freedom, democracy, of the rule of law, of respect for human rights. Failure to hold Maduro and his officials accountable would be irresponsible and a failure of leadership.

On the resolution before us today, Mr. Speaker, I am optimistic that the U.S. House will pass my bill expressing support for the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democracy. I hope that it will pass so that we can send a swift and strong message to Maduro that the United States House of Representatives has taken notice of the developments in Venezuela and that we will not allow these transgressions to pass by quietly.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to repeat what I said before, that I hope all member states of the Organization of American States will similarly call on the Venezuelan government to abide by their OAS Convention on Human Rights and the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

This is a very bipartisan resolution. I agree with everything that the gentlewoman from Florida said. In fact, I agree with everything that all of the speakers on both sides of the aisle have said.

The United States stands for freedom in the world, and I think it is very important that the Congress of the United States speaks out loudly and clearly when people's rights are being trampled on, as is the situation in Venezuela today.

So again, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), and I want to thank Chairman ROYCE, who once again has shown in such a bipartisan way that members of the Foreign Affairs Committee work closely together because both parties share a love of freedom and democracy. Both parties care very much that freedom and democracy around the world takes root. I can think of nothing more bipartisan than to stand up for freedom and democracy all over the world, and when a country has its rights trampled by the government that is supposed to protect it, it is time that we in the United States Congress say enough: we are not going to sweep this under the rug. We are going to speak out loudly and forcefully against it.

I again thank Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Chairman ROYCE.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to reiterate my strong thanks to the chairman of our committee, Mr. ROYCE, and to our esteemed ranking member, Mr. ENGEL. Both of them have been very present and very energized on the United States House of Representatives speaking in a clear voice in favor of democracy, the rule of law, freedom, and liberties being respected by the Maduro regime, and so far we have seen the opposite be true.

I want to again suggest to my colleagues that passing this resolution of solidarity with the peaceful protesters of Venezuela is an important first step, and we hope that those who support this cause will follow-up with my office and sign the letter to President Obama asking for economic sanctions against human rights violators and also cosponsor my bill that follows and tracks that same letter.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 488, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1500

UNITED STATES-ISRAEL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP ACT OF 2014

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 938) to strengthen the strategic alliance between the United States and Israel, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 938

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE AND TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title and table of contents.
Sec. 2. Findings.
Sec. 3. Declaration of policy.

TITLE I—UNITED STATES-ISRAEL STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

Sec. 101. Amendments to the United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012.
Sec. 102. Authorization of assistance for Israel.
Sec. 103. United States-Israel cooperation on cyber-security.
Sec. 104. Statement of United States Policy Regarding Israel's defense systems.
Sec. 105. Report on other matters.
Sec. 106. Statement of policy.
Sec. 107. Sense of Congress.

TITLE II—UNITED STATES-ISRAEL ENERGY COOPERATION

Sec. 201. United States-Israel energy cooperation.

TITLE III—OFFSET

Sec. 301. Offset.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The turmoil in the Middle East poses a serious threat to United States national security interests and requires cooperation with allies that are willing to work with the United States in pursuit of shared objectives.

(2) The October 31, 1998, Memorandum of Agreement signed by President Clinton and Prime Minister Netanyahu commits the United States to working jointly with Israel towards enhancing Israel's defensive and deterrent capabilities and upgrading the framework of the United States-Israel strategic and military relationships, as well as the technological cooperation between both countries.

(3) On August 16, 2007, the United States and Israel signed a Memorandum of Understanding reaffirming United States commitment to the security of Israel and establishing a 10-year framework for incremental increases in United States military assistance to Israel.

(4) The Memorandum of Understanding signed two years later on January 16, 2009 reaffirmed the United States commitment and noted ''the security, military and intelligence cooperation between the United States and Israel''.

(5) The United States and Israel conduct a semi-annual Strategic Dialogue. The Department of State, in a statement following the July 12, 2012, meeting of the Strategic Dialogue, noted that the discussions focused on such issues of mutual concern as ''Iran's continued quest to develop nuclear weapons, which the United States and Israel are both determined to prevent'' and ''how the continued violence of the Syrian regime against its citizens [assisted by Iran and Hezbollah] could also lead to severe consequences for the entire region''.

SEC. 3. DECLARATION OF POLICY.

Congress declares that Israel is a major strategic partner of the United States.

TITLE I—UNITED STATES-ISRAEL STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

SEC. 101. AMENDMENTS TO THE UNITED STATES-ISRAEL ENHANCED SECURITY COOPERATION ACT OF 2012.

(a) UNITED STATES ACTIONS TO ASSIST IN THE DEFENSE OF ISRAEL AND PROTECT UNITED STATES INTERESTS.—Section 4 of the United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–150; 22 U.S.C. 8603) is amended—

(1) by striking ''It is the sense of Congress that the United States Government should''

and inserting ''(a) IN GENERAL.—The President should, to the maximum extent practicable,''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this subsection, the President shall submit to Congress a report on the implementation of this section.''.

(b) EXTENSION OF WAR RESERVES STOCKPILE AUTHORITY.—Section 5(a) of the United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–150) is amended to read as follows:

''(a) EXTENSION OF WAR RESERVES STOCKPILE AUTHORITY.—

''(1) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2005.—Section 12001(d) of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2005 (Public Law 108–287; 118 Stat. 1011), is amended by striking 'more than 10 years after' and inserting 'more than 11 years after'.

''(2) FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961.—Section 514(b)(2)(A) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2321h(b)(2)(A)) is amended by striking 'and 2014' and inserting ', 2014, and 2015'.''.

(c) AMENDMENTS TO REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO ASSESSMENT OF ISRAEL'S QUALITATIVE MILITARY EDGE OVER MILITARY THREATS.—

(1) ASSESSMENT REQUIRED; REPORTS.—Section 201 of Public Law 110–429 (122 Stat. 4843; 22 U.S.C. 2776 note) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking ''an ongoing basis'' and inserting ''a biennial basis''; and

(B) in subsection (c)(2)—

(i) in the heading, by striking ''QUADRENNIAL'' and inserting ''BIENNIAL''; and

(ii) in the text, by striking ''Not later than four years after the date on which the President transmits the initial report under paragraph (1), and every four years thereafter,'' and inserting ''Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014, and biennially thereafter,''.

(2) REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on—

(i) the range of cyber and asymmetric threats posed to Israel by state and non-state actors; and

(ii) the joint efforts of the United States and Israel to address the threats identified in clause (i).

(B) FORM.—The report required under subparagraph (A) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

(C) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this paragraph, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

SEC. 102. AUTHORIZATION OF ASSISTANCE FOR ISRAEL.

(a) FINDING.—Congress finds that Israel has adopted high standards in the field of export controls, including by becoming adherent to the Australia Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, and the Wassenaar Arrangement control lists, and by enacting robust legislation and regulations for the control of dual-use and defense items.

(b) EXPEDITED LICENSING PROCEDURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall direct the Secretary of State to undertake discussions with Israel to identify the steps required to be taken to include Israel within the list of countries described in section 740.20(c)(1) of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations (relating to eligibility for Strategic Trade Authorization).

(2) REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter for a period of 3 years or until such time that Israel is included on the list of countries determined as eligible for the Strategic Trade Authorization, whichever occurs first, the President shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate a report on the following:

(i) The current status of negotiations.

(ii) The reasons that Israel has not yet been determined as eligible for the Strategic Trade Authorization.

(B) FORM.—The report required by subparagraph (A) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may contain a classified annex.

(c) LICENSING TREATMENT AS MTCR ADHERENT.—The President shall direct the Secretary of Commerce to ensure that, subject to the requirements of section 6(l) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. App. 2405(l)) (as continued in effect pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act), Israel is treated no less favorably than other members or adherents to the Missile Technology Control Regime designated in Country Group A:2 in Supplement No. 1 to part 740 of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations.

(d) OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION.—In carrying out its authorities under title IV of chapter 2 of part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2191 et seq.), the Overseas Private Investment Corporation should consider giving preference to providing insurance, financing, or reinsurance for energy and water projects in Israel.

(e) ENERGY, WATER, AGRICULTURE, AND ALTERNATIVE FUEL TECHNOLOGIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President is authorized to carry out cooperative activities with Israel and to provide assistance to Israel that promotes cooperation in the fields of energy, water, agriculture, alternative fuel technologies, and civil space, where appropriate and pursuant to existing law.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the President is authorized to share and exchange with Israel research, technology, intelligence, information, equipment, and personnel that the President determines will advance the national security interests of the United States and is consistent with the Strategic Dialogue and pertinent provisions of law—

(A) by enhancing scientific cooperation between Israel and the United States; or

(B) by the sale, lease, exchange in kind, or other techniques the President determines to be suitable.

(f) COOPERATIVE RESEARCH PILOT PROGRAMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security, acting through the Director of the Homeland Security Advanced Research Projects Agency and with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, is authorized to enter into cooperative research pilot programs with Israel to enhance Israel's capabilities in the following areas:

(A) Border, maritime, and aviation security.

(B) Explosives detection.

(C) Emergency services.

(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For fiscal year 2014, there are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Homeland Security—

(A) $1,000,000 to carry out paragraph (1)(A);

(B) $1,000,000 to carry out paragraph (1)(B); and

(C) $1,000,000 to carry out paragraph (1)(C).

SEC. 103. UNITED STATES-ISRAEL COOPERATION ON CYBER-SECURITY.

It is a sense of Congress that the United States and Israel should take steps and explore avenues to increase cooperation on cyber-security.

SEC. 104. STATEMENT OF UNITED STATES POLICY REGARDING ISRAEL'S DEFENSE SYSTEMS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress—

(1) commends the first phase completion of the David's Sling Weapon System (DSWS) by the Israel Missile Defense Organization and the U.S. Missile Defense Agency, which is designed to provide additional opportunities for interception by the joint United States-Israel Arrow Weapon System (Arrow 2 and Arrow 3);

(2) congratulates the Israel Missile Defense Organization and the U.S. Missile Defense Agency on successfully executing the Arrow 3 flyout of a more advanced interceptor, which will improve Israel's defenses against upper tier ballistic missile threats from nations including Iran;

(3) recognizes that during Operation Pillar of Defense in November 2012, Israel deployed Iron Dome short-range rocket defense batteries to intercept Hamas-launched rockets fired from Gaza—of those rockets that posed a threat to the life of Israeli citizens, 80 to 85 percent were successfully intercepted, saving countless lives; and

(4) agrees that, as stated by former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta, ''Iron Dome performed, I think it's fair to say, remarkably well during the recent escalation . . . Iron Dome does not start wars. It helps prevent wars.''.

(b) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It should be the policy of the United States that the President, acting through the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State, should provide assistance, upon request by the Government of Israel, for the enhancement of the David's Sling Weapon System, the enhancement of the joint United States-Israel Arrow Weapon System (Arrow 2 and Arrow 3), and the procurement and enhancement of the Iron Dome short-range rocket defense system for purposes of intercepting short-range rockets, missiles, and other projectiles launched against Israel.

SEC. 105. REPORT ON OTHER MATTERS.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the United States and Israel should continue collaborative efforts to enhance Israel's military capabilities, including through the transfer of advanced combat aircraft, active phased array radar, military tanker-transports, other multi-mission military aircraft, advanced or specialized munitions, and through joint training and exercise opportunities in the United States;

(2) the United States and Israel should expeditiously conclude an updated Memorandum of Understanding regarding United States security assistance in order to help Israel meet its unique security requirements and uphold its qualitative military edge;

(3) the United States should ensure that Israel has timely access to important military equipment, including by augmenting the forward deployed United States War Reserve Stockpile in Israel and by continuing to provide Israel with critical military equipment and spare parts through the Department of Defense's Excess Defense Articles program; and

(4) the United States should continue to support Israel's inherent right of self-defense.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that—

(A) reviews the progress made toward the actions and efforts identified in the report required under section 6(b) of the United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–150; 22 U.S.C. 8604(b)); and

(B) provides policy recommendations, if necessary.

(2) FORM.—The report required by paragraph (1) may include a classified annex.

(3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate.

SEC. 106. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It shall be the policy of the United States to include Israel in the list of countries that participate in the visa waiver program under section 217 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1187) when Israel satisfies, and as long as Israel continues to satisfy, the requirements for inclusion in such program specified in such section.

SEC. 107. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that the Department of State should continue and, to the furthest extent practicable, increase its coordination on monitoring and combating anti-Semitism with the Government of Israel.

TITLE II—UNITED STATES-ISRAEL ENERGY COOPERATION

SEC. 201. UNITED STATES-ISRAEL ENERGY COOPERATION.

(a) FINDINGS.—Section 917(a) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17337(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''renewable'' and inserting ''covered'';

(2) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by striking ''possible many'' and inserting ''possible—

''(A) many'';

(B) by inserting ''and'' after the semicolon at the end; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) significant contributions to the development of renewable energy and energy efficiency through the established programs of the United States-Israel Binational Industrial Research and Development Foundation and the United States-Israel Binational Science Foundation;'';

(3) in paragraph (6)—

(A) by striking ''renewable'' and inserting ''covered''; and

(B) by striking ''and'' after the semicolon at the end;

(4) in paragraph (7)—

(A) by striking ''renewable'' and inserting ''covered''; and

(B) by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

''(8) United States-Israel energy cooperation, and the development of natural resources by Israel, are strategic interests of the United States;

''(9) Israel is a strategic partner of the United States in water technology;

''(10) the United States can play a role in assisting Israel with regional safety and security issues;

''(11) the National Science Foundation of the United States should collaborate with the Israel Science Foundation;

''(12) the United States and Israel should strive to develop more robust academic cooperation in energy innovation technology and engineering, water science, technology transfer, and analysis of geopolitical implications of new natural resource development and associated areas;

''(13) the United States supports the goals of the Alternative Fuels Administration of Israel;

''(14) the United States strongly urges open dialogue and continued mechanisms for regular engagement and encourages further cooperation between applicable departments, agencies, ministries, institutions of higher education, and the private sectors of the United States and Israel on energy security issues, including—

''(A) identifying policy priorities associated with the development of natural resources of Israel;

''(B) discussing best practices to secure cyber energy infrastructure;

''(C) best practice sharing;

''(D) leveraging natural gas to positively impact regional stability;

''(E) improving energy efficiency and the overall performance of water technologies through research and development in water desalination, wastewater treatment and reclamation, and other water treatment technologies;

''(F) technical and environmental management of deep-water exploration and production;

''(G) coastal protection and restoration;

''(H) academic outreach and engagement;

''(I) private sector and business development engagement;

''(J) regulatory consultations;

''(K) leveraging alternative transportation fuels and technologies; and

''(L) any other areas determined appropriate by the United States and Israel;

''(15) the United States acknowledges the achievements and importance of the United States-Israel Binational Industrial Research and Development Foundation and the United States-Israel Binational Science Foundation and supports continued multiyear funding to ensure the continuity of the programs of the Foundations; and

''(16) the United States and Israel have a shared interest in addressing their immediate, near-term, and long-term energy and environmental challenges.''.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—Section 917(b)(1) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17337(b)(1)) is amended by striking ''renewable energy or energy efficiency'' and inserting ''covered energy''.

(c) TYPES OF ENERGY.—Section 917(b)(2) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17337(b)(2)) is amended—

(1) in the heading, by striking ''TYPES OF'' and inserting ''COVERED'';

(2) in subparagraph (F), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon at the end;

(3) in subparagraph (G), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(H) natural gas energy, including conventional and unconventional natural gas technologies and natural gas projects conducted by or in conjunction with the United States-Israel Binational Science Foundation, the United States-Israel Binational Industrial Research and Development Foundation, and the United States-Israel Science and Technology Foundation; and

''(I) improvement of energy efficiency and the overall performance of water technologies through research and development in water desalination, wastewater treatment and reclamation, and other water treatment technologies.''.

(d) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.—Section 917(b)(3) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17337(b)(3)) is amended by striking ''energy efficiency or renewable'' and inserting ''covered''.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS; INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS.—Section 917 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17337) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (e) and (f), respectively;

(2) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

''(c) INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may, subject to the availability of appropriations, enter into cooperative agreements supporting and enhancing dialogue and planning involving international partnerships between the Department, including National Laboratories of the Department, and the Government of Israel and its ministries, offices, and institutions.

''(2) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Secretary may not pay more than 50 percent of the costs described in paragraph (1).

''(3) ANNUAL REPORTS.—The Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, the Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate an annual report that describes—

''(A) actions taken to carry out this subsection; and

''(B) any projects under this subsection for which the Secretary requests funding.

''(d) UNITED STATES-ISRAEL CENTER.—The Secretary may establish a joint United States-Israel Center based in an area of the United States with the experience, knowledge, and expertise in offshore energy development to further dialogue and collaboration to develop more robust academic cooperation in energy innovation technology and engineering, water science, technology transfer, and analysis of geopolitical implications of new natural resource development and associated areas.''; and

(3) by amending subsection (f) (as redesignated) to read as follows:

''(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Of the amounts made available under section 931 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16231), the Secretary is authorized to use $2,000,000 for each fiscal year to carry out this section.''.

(f) TERMINATION.—Subsection (e) of section 917 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17337) (as redesignated by subsection (e)(1)) is amended by striking ''the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act'' and inserting ''September 30, 2021''.

TITLE III—OFFSET

SEC. 301. OFFSET.

Section 102(a) of the Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–73) is amended by striking ''$1,500,000,000'' and inserting ''$1,487,000,000''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of this legislation. This is the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Declaration.

I want to begin by thanking the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and thanking the gentleman from Florida, Mr. TED DEUTCH, for their leadership in authoring this important measure.

Israel's strategic reality has been fundamentally transformed. As it looks to its borders and looks beyond those borders, the threats to Israel are changing, and they are growing. These threats challenge Israel's qualitative military edge and that is its ability to counter and defeat any credible conventional military threat. It challenges it in ways that have, perhaps, never been quite so daunting.

Myself, ELIOT ENGEL, TED DEUTCH, and others, had an opportunity last year to travel to Israel to see the effects, see the efforts, by Israel to counter the rocket attacks that come in from Gaza by Hamas.

I had an opportunity back during the second Lebanon war, during the war with Hezbollah, to actually see the effects in August of 2006 of what was happening with rockets firing into Haifa. On a daily basis, the city was under siege.

There were literally 600 Israelis—Jewish Israelis, Arab Israelis, Druze Israelis—who were victims of these attacks from the communities in Haifa who were in the trauma hospital, and every day, these rockets would rain down.

This was not just the handiwork of Hezbollah and of Hamas that we saw last year—no. This was with rockets provided by Iran—by Iran and Syria.

In the rocket attacks that I saw in 2006, those rockets—every one of them—the cone of those rockets had 80,000 ball bearings, and they would be fired on schools, on homes, on the hospital itself, that was a target. That was done to create the maximum number of civilian casualties.

Well, so it is, in terms of the challenges that Israel faces, again, those challenges now because Iran is supplying the weaponry.

In response, the Congress continues to do everything in our power to support Israel from its security to supporting its economy. That is the intention, Mr. Speaker, of this legislation that Mr. TED DEUTCH and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN have brought before this body. It is a matter of shared values, shared experiences, and shared interests between the United States and Israel.

This legislation will not only expedite the provision of critical security assistance to Israel and require more frequent and detailed reporting on Israel's qualitative military edge, as well as a report on joint efforts to address the other threats—asymmetric threats that Israel faces, but it will also focus on expanding cooperation in areas of mutual interest by supporting a range of joint activities from civil space cooperation to homeland security measures.

Finally, it will dramatically expand our cooperation with Israel on energy production. It will link the two economies in important ways, and that is why I, again, thank ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN and TED DEUTCH for bringing this legislation before us.

I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, January 22, 2014.

Hon. ED ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing to you concerning the jurisdictional interest of the Committee on Homeland Security in matters being considered in H.R. 938, the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013.

I recognize the importance of H.R. 938 and the need for the legislation to move expeditiously. Therefore, while we have a valid claim to jurisdiction over certain sections of the bill, specifically, section 5(f), I do not intend to request a sequential referral. This, of course, is conditional on our mutual understanding that nothing in this legislation or my decision to forego a sequential referral waives, reduces or otherwise affects the jurisdiction of the Committee on Homeland Security, and that a copy of this letter and your response acknowledging our jurisdictional interest will be included in the Committee Report and as part of the Congressional Record during consideration of this bill by the House. I also ask that you support my request to name members of this committee to any conference committee that is established to consider such provisions.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, January 23, 2014.

Hon. MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security, Ford House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCAUL: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 938, the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013. I acknowledge that by forgoing action and not seeking a sequential referral on this legislation, your Committee is not diminishing or altering its jurisdiction.

I also concur with you that forgoing action on this bill does not in any way prejudice the Committee on Homeland Security with respect to its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future, and I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 938 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to working with the Committee on Homeland Security as the bill moves through the legislative process.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, February 27, 2014.

Hon. ED ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing with respect to H.R. 938, the ''United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013,'' which the Committee on Foreign Affairs ordered reported favorably on January 29, 2014. As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions in H.R. 938 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, and your agreement to support mutually-agreeable changes to the legislation, I agree to discharge our Committee from further consideration of this bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Judiciary Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 938 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that our Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction. Our Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and asks that you support any such request.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 938, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration of H.R. 938.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, February 27, 2014.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOODLATTE: Thank you for agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 938, the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act, and for working with us to incorporate mutually agreeable changes to provisions within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary.

I agree that forgoing further action on this bill does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 938 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with the Committee on the Judiciary as the bill moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY,
Washington, DC, February 28, 2014.

Hon. EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing to you regarding H.R. 938, the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013. This legislation was initially referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology (among others). The bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

H.R. 938 has been marked up by the Committee on Foreign Affairs. Based on discussions that the staff of our two committees have had regarding this legislation and in the interest of permitting your Committee to proceed expeditiously to floor consideration of this important legislation, I am willing to waive further consideration of this bill. I do so with the understanding that language specifically requested by the Committee will be included in the legislation when it is considered on the floor and that by waiving consideration of the bill, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology does not waive any future jurisdictional claim of the subject matters contained in the bill which fall within its Rule X jurisdiction.

Additionally, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology expressly reserves its authority to seek conferees on any provision within its jurisdiction during any House-Senate conference that may be convened on this, or any similar legislation. I ask for your commitment to support any request by the Committee for conferees on H.R. 938, as well as any similar or related legislation.

Further, I ask that a copy of this letter and your response be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 938.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for the positive negotiations between our Committees; the result is an improved bill. I look forward to working with you as this important measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEES ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, February 28, 2014.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you for agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 938, the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act, and for working with us to incorporate mutually agreeable changes to provisions within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

I agree that forgoing further action on this bill does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your Committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 938 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with the Science Committee as the bill moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 938, the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act.

Mr. Speaker, I would first like to thank Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, the chairman of the Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee, and Mr. DEUTCH, the ranking member of that subcommittee, for authoring this legislation and for working tirelessly over the past year to further refine some of the provisions.

This legislation comes at a critical time in the history of the U.S.-Israel relationship. On every border, Israel faces instability, at best, and violence and chaos, at worst.

Syria remains engulfed in a horrific civil war that has left more than 140,000 people dead. Israel's neighbors, including Lebanon and Egypt, are plagued by instability.

Iran has not yet abandoned its pursuit of nuclear weapons capability and continues to terrorize the world with its support for violent extremism. Iran is the leading supporter of terrorism around the world.

And, under the threat of rocket fire from Gaza, Israel is now considering new options under a framework for peace with Palestinians and the Arab world. Hamas still controls the Gaza Strip, and their disregard for human life is well known.

The U.S. cannot afford to sit idly by. We must be engaged in each of these issues and support our ally, Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East.

This legislation before us today is critical because it sends a clear and unmistakable message to America's foes: America stands with Israel. Let me repeat that: America stands with Israel.

Now is the time to reaffirm the vital importance we place on the U.S.-Israel relationship and to pursue new ways to improve our partnership at every level. Let me say the relationship between the U.S. and Israel is not a one-way street. It is a two-way street.

We share a love for democracy; we share a love for human rights; and we share a love and understanding that we share things that are so important to both countries. It is not, again, just a one-way street. It is a two-way street.

There is more collaboration between the United States and Israel on everything, each and every day. The relationship deepens, the coordination deepens—coordination in terms of military, in terms of intelligence sharing, in terms of so many other things. Israel is the best ally the United States has, not in the Middle East, but in the world.

Specifically, this bill will build on our robust defense cooperation, increase U.S.-Israel collaboration on cybersecurity, expand U.S.-Israel energy cooperation, and reaffirm our commitment to Israel missile defense programs, which have saved many innocent lives, such as the Iron Dome.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 938, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlelady from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), the chairman emeritus and Middle East Subcommittee chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and, of course, the author of this bill.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, Congressman TED DEUTCH and I introduced the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act because we are committed to the security of our friend and ally in an increasingly volatile Middle East.

Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL have been instrumental in getting this important bill to the House floor today. Today is, indeed, a very significant day in the history of the relationship between the United States and Israel.

This bill takes the already strong bonds between our two countries and makes it even stronger. With over 350 Members of Congress having lent their support to this bill as cosponsors, it is truly a bipartisan measure.

This bill designates Israel as a major strategic partner of the United States and extends U.S.-Israeli cooperation in a variety of areas, including intelligence, homeland security, energy, science, trade, and so forth. It supports U.S. efforts to help Israel maintain its qualitative military edge over its neighbors and its foes.

As Israel faces even more dangerous threats than ever before, particularly now with so much uncertainty and so much violence spreading throughout the region, and as Iran continues to announce advancements on its nuclear program due to this weak interim agreement, Israel needs our support now more than ever.

Passing this bill, Mr. Speaker, will send a strong message to those that continue to seek to harm Israel and to harm the United States. It will show the rest of the world just how seriously we value our friendship with the democratic Jewish state of Israel, not only because Israel has been a true ally, but because we share the same ideals and the same values.

In a time, Mr. Speaker, when there is a worrisome movement to delegitimize Israel, a campaign by some to boycott and divest from Israel, now is the time to lend our unequivocal support to the democratic Jewish state of Israel.

With anti-Semitism on an alarming rise throughout the world, Israel and the worldwide Jewish community need to know that the United States will do everything we can to ensure Israel's continued safety and security.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH).

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, the legislation before us today is the product of a real bipartisan commitment to the U.S.-Israel relationship.

I would like to thank Chairman ED ROYCE and Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL for making this bill a priority of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and ensuring its consideration on the floor here today.

I would especially like to thank and recognize my colleague, my friend, my fellow Floridian, chairman emeritus of the full committee, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, for her leadership on this legislation, but not just for that, for her ongoing commitment to the strength of the U.S.-Israel relationship and for standing up, as she always does, in support of people in need in every part of the world. We are so grateful for your work.

The U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act aims to strengthen the ties that bind our two nations and enhance cooperation in multiple ways. The legislation reflects the simple truth—a very simple truth that the U.S. relationship with Israel is bound not only by mutual interests, but it is bound by deeply shared values.

Indeed, the provisions of this bill, H.R. 938, mirror the broad cooperation between the United States and Israel when it comes not only to security, but to trade, research, energy, and so much more.

This bill is, of course, crafted with the heightened security risks that Israel faces every day—with those heightened security risks in mind. The Middle East region is as volatile as ever, and the world must know that our commitment to Israel's security has never been stronger than it is at this moment.

From the threat of daily rocket attacks from Hezbollah, Hamas, and other groups that send rockets at Israel citizens indiscriminately, to the risk of spillover from the Syrian conflict, the growing humanitarian crisis there, and to the existential threat of a nuclear-armed Iran, Israel faces an array of very complex security challenges.

Recognizing these threats, the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act includes measures to ensure Israel's qualitative military edge in a tough and all too often hostile neighborhood.

H.R. 938 extends authority for the United States to expand our own forward-deployed weapons stockpile in Israel. This stockpile is critical to maintaining U.S. military readiness in the region and ensuring that our Armed Forces have access to the equipment they need to defend our interests at a moment's notice.

This legislation also reaffirms Congress' support for Israel's right to self-defense by authorizing continued cooperation between the United States and the state of Israel on innovative missile defense programs, like the Iron Dome, Arrow, and David's Sling.

These systems have proven remarkably successful at intercepting rockets and protecting the safety of the Israeli people.

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Yet, even as this bill advances the security of Israel, it ultimately serves as a reminder to the world and as a reminder to America of the depth of the United States-Israel relationship. H.R. 938 highlights Israel's enormous contributions to water and irrigation, agriculture, homeland security, and cybersecurity by authorizing further cooperation with the United States in these fields. It significantly expands the breadth of U.S.-Israel cooperation on energy and alternative energy forms, and I would like to thank Chairman UPTON and Ranking Member WAXMAN for their work on this critical language. The bill also strengthens our trade ties to Israel by initiating a process to include Israel in export license exemptions programs and, lastly, by affirming Congress' support for Israel's inclusion in the Visa Waiver Program.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ENGEL. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. DEUTCH. Despite facing enormous security challenges, our ally Israel has thrived as an open and free society with a vibrant economy, a strong democracy and as a global innovator in agriculture, energy, and countless other fields. The United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act reflects our bipartisan commitment to a safe, to a secure, and to a thriving Jewish State of Israel.

I am deeply moved by the tremendous support for Israel in this Congress, with more than half of its membership signed onto this bill. But why should this be a surprise? The security of the State of Israel is important to our national security. A thriving economy in the State of Israel, with investments made by so many American companies, is important to our own economy. Most importantly, having an ally that shares our values, our commitment to democracy and to the rule of law is something of which the value cannot even be measured.

I urge my colleagues to pass this legislation and to send the world a message that our bond with Israel will remain unshakable.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS), an esteemed member of our committee but also one who has been extremely focused on ensuring Israel's qualitative military edge.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I do appreciate the opportunity. Of course, you and the ranking member, Mr. ENGEL, have always been supportive of me, and I do appreciate that a great deal as we work on these issues together.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of H.R. 938, the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013. This legislation recognizes and enhances the historic and vitally important relationship between the United States and Israel. As the only democracy in the volatile Middle East, ensuring a strong Israel should be the priority of this body and this administration.

Recently, this body passed H.R. 1992, bipartisan legislation that I introduced, along with Congressman SCHNEIDER of Illinois, to modify QME reports to reflect the ever-changing threats that Israel faces. I am pleased that H.R. 1992 was also included in this Strategic Partnership Act.

Specifically, H.R. 1992 shortens the review time of U.S. weapons sales to Israel's neighbors from 4 years to 2 years. In addition, it asks this administration to determine how much of a threat asymmetric and cyber warfare are to Israel's security.

Anyone can look in just the last 4 years at how much has changed surrounding our friend Israel. It is important that we take and lower this time frame so that we are constantly making sure they have a qualitative military edge. This is of vital importance. The administration and this Congress ought to come together, and being a part of this Strategic Partnership Act ensures that along with H.R. 1992.

The Strategic Partnership Act also addresses a number of other important aspects of our relationship, including robust cybersecurity cooperation, the facilitation of increased tourism between the two nations, and the extension of U.S.-Israel energy cooperation.

Peace between Israel and its neighbors is something that has long been sought after. I am pleased that H.R. 938 highlights Israel's missile defense system, the Iron Dome. The Iron Dome gives Israel the ability to protect its citizens and to prevent military escalation.

With this, I want to thank the really incredible work of the chairman of the subcommittee, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. DEUTCH for their encouragement in writing this legislation and for being such avid sponsors and avid proponents of our relationship with Israel.

H.R. 938 is an important step. I urge my colleagues to continue their support and to vote ''yes.''

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, in closing, let me again say that this is another example of bipartisan cooperation on the Foreign Affairs Committee.

I want to again thank Chairman ROYCE for being such a great partner in ensuring that important legislation like this passes our Foreign Affairs Committee and the floor of the House in a very bipartisan way.

I am proud to support H.R. 938. It reaffirms our mutually beneficial relationship with our great ally, the Jewish State of Israel, at a critically important time. I want to again thank my colleagues, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH), for authoring this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support this.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

When we are speaking of this issue, I think Members should reflect that we are speaking of an Israel that faces from a regime in Iran that actually speaks of wiping Israel off of the map, a regime in Iran that seeks to acquire a nuclear weapons capability and the missiles to deliver nuclear weapons, a regime in Iran that has a proxy called Hezbollah.

I remember a Deputy Secretary of State calling that organization the ''A team'' of terrorism in the world, Hezbollah. Hezbollah is greatly expanding its size and its influence, and it is doing so not only in Lebanon but in Syria, which neighbors Israel. It is an organization that has, probably, some 70,000 rockets by now that are aimed at Israel's population centers. We think of an Israel challenged by the proliferation of al Qaeda-affiliated organizations throughout that region. We think of the ongoing threats from Hamas to the south and the Palestinian Islamic jihad.

Those are severe challenges, but Israel never has been as strong as it is now. Think of Israel's dynamic entrepreneurial culture there. For those who have been to Tel Aviv, it is inspiring—it is unbelievable—the entrepreneurial spirit, the innovative culture. You get a better sense of why Israel is so strong but also a sense of why the bond between the United States and Israel is so great. It is that dynamic economy and society that are building blocks for Israel's qualitative military edge and its relationship with the United States.

The benefits that we get from U.S.-Israel relationships, like the development of the Iron Dome, is very strong. I think that was probably built for 10 percent the price or cost, and now all of our allies are interested in acquiring that Iron Dome; and at the same time, when you think about the Iron Dome, you think of something that we in the United States thought was impossible to develop, but in Israel, engineers did so.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation today stands by our values; it stands by our interests; and it stands by our ally Israel. It is legislation all Members of the House should support.

Seeing no additional speakers, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill.

The relationship between America and Israel, which is already extremely strong, will be deepened further by passage of this legislation. H.R. 938 includes a number of important provisions that will expedite cooperation and trade between the U.S. and Israel. These include expedited licensing procedures for items covered under the Missile Technology Control Regime and other arms control regimes, encouraging the Overseas Private Investment Corporation to give preference to providing insurance, financing, or reinsurance for energy and water projects in Israel, and measures to foster research and technology exchanges in the areas of energy, water, homeland security, agriculture and alternative fuel technologies. Both of our nations would benefit from these latter provisions.

To help Israel meet the military challenges posed by short-range and other ballistic missiles, the bill encourages the President to provide assistance to Israel to facilitate the deployment of the David's Sling Weapons System, the enhancement of the Arrow Weapon System, and the Iron Dome System. As my colleagues know, the Iron Dome system has been used multiple times over the last several years to defeat rocket attacks staged by Hamas out of Gaza. As those attacks represent the most imminent danger to Israeli population centers, our continued support for that system is extremely important.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be a cosponsor of this legislation and I encourage all of my colleagues to support its passage.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. DEUTCH for sponsoring this expertly-crafted and timely legislation.

It is also a substantive bill. It expands our relationship with our closest ally by supporting the Iron Dome, David's Sling, and Arrow-3 missile defense systems, transferring defense items to Israel, pre-positioning more military equipment in Israel that both allies would have available in a crisis, and by expanding cooperation in cyber security, energy, water, homeland security, agriculture, and alternative fuel technologies. All of these are important, and as a package they do a lot to strengthen our partnership with Israel.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to point out Section 107, the amendment that I proposed at markup and which was accepted by the committee. It states the sense of Congress that the State Department should also increase its coordination with Israel on combating anti-Semitism.

While the State Department is doing excellent work in the fight against the unique evil of anti-Semitism, the government of Israel is going to have an indispensable perspective, experience—including tragic experience—and expertise on the Middle-Eastern security dimensions and implications of anti-Semitic incitement. Our government should be consulting, cooperating, and coordinating with them on this, benefiting from Israeli expertise.

As we see on a sickeningly regular basis, many governments in the Middle East (and elsewhere) propagate anti-Semitic incitement as an official or quasi-official state ideology—the hate that still kills. They do this in order to distract people from their own authoritarian rule and human rights abuses. This constant incitement is a major factor in the security situation in the Middle East. Last February I chaired a hearing at which we heard important testimony from Dr. Zuhdi Jasser on this subject. He made the point that it is not only Jews who suffer from this incitement, but that Muslims suffer too, as Middle-Eastern despots deploy anti-Semitism as one of their principal tools in the subjugation and impoverishment of entire Muslim peoples.

I'd like to put on the record my legislative intent that the State Department's engagement with Israel should include but also go beyond the Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism. In 2004 I offered the amendment that created that office, and so I've followed and supported its excellent work. But this work is too important to be left to one small office—it should and must include the Department of State at the country team level and above.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment will add a new security dimension to our efforts to combat the pernicious evil of anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism is an ugly reality that won't go away by ignoring or wishing it away. Let's cooperate with Israel in this struggle as well.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California, the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. ROYCE, for yielding me time.

And I thank the gentlewoman from Florida, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for her work on this bill.

H.R. 938 recognizes the longstanding relationship between the United States and Israel and bolsters our cooperation in the area of offshore resources.

This bipartisan legislation expands the scope of an existing grant program to promote research and development for conventional and unconventional natural gas, water desalination, wastewater treatment and reclamation, and other water treatment technologies.

It establishes an Energy Cooperation Working Group with the Israeli government on energy activities. Furthering our dialogue and collaboration on academic innovation and technology advancement will help both our nations leverage energy development.

I commend Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman FRED UPTON and Ranking Member HENRY WAXMAN for their sponsorship of H.R. 3677, which has been incorporated into this bill, and for their leadership on this measure.

Both Republicans and Democrats support the United States' partnership with Israel and expanding our cooperation on energy efficiency and development. H.R. 938 would not only help our efforts to achieve energy independence, but also helps the Israeli people achieve stronger national security.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 938, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2014

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2126) to facilitate better alignment, cooperation, and best practices between commercial real estate landlords and tenants regarding energy efficiency in buildings, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2126

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Energy Efficiency Improvement Act of 2014''.

TITLE I—BETTER BUILDINGS

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Better Buildings Act of 2014''.

SEC. 102. ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN FEDERAL AND OTHER BUILDINGS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of General Services.

(2) COST-EFFECTIVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURE.—The term ''cost-effective energy efficiency measure'' means any building product, material, equipment, or service, and the installing, implementing, or operating thereof, that provides energy savings in an amount that is not less than the cost of such installing, implementing, or operating.

(3) COST-EFFECTIVE WATER EFFICIENCY MEASURE.—The term ''cost-effective water efficiency measure'' means any building product, material, equipment, or service, and the installing, implementing, or operating thereof, that provides water savings in an amount that is not less than the cost of such installing, implementing, or operating.

(b) MODEL PROVISIONS, POLICIES, AND BEST PRACTICES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy and after providing the public with an opportunity for notice and comment, shall develop model commercial leasing provisions and best practices in accordance with this subsection.

(2) COMMERCIAL LEASING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The model commercial leasing provisions developed under this subsection shall, at a minimum, align the interests of building owners and tenants with regard to investments in cost-effective energy efficiency measures and cost-effective water efficiency measures to encourage building owners and tenants to collaborate to invest in such measures.

(B) USE OF MODEL PROVISIONS.—The Administrator may use the model commercial leasing provisions developed under this subsection in any standard leasing document that designates a Federal agency (or other client of the Administrator) as a landlord or tenant.

(C) PUBLICATION.—The Administrator shall periodically publish the model commercial leasing provisions developed under this subsection, along with explanatory materials, to encourage building owners and tenants in the private sector to use such provisions and materials.

(3) REALTY SERVICES.—The Administrator shall develop policies and practices to implement cost-effective energy efficiency measures and cost-effective water efficiency measures for the realty services provided by the Administrator to Federal agencies (or other clients of the Administrator), including periodic training of appropriate Federal employees and contractors on how to identify and evaluate those measures.

(4) STATE AND LOCAL ASSISTANCE.—The Administrator, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, shall make available model commercial leasing provisions and best practices developed under this subsection to State, county, and municipal governments for use in managing owned and leased building space in accordance with the goal of encouraging investment in all cost-effective energy efficiency measures and cost-effective water efficiency measures.

SEC. 103. SEPARATE SPACES WITH HIGH-PERFORMANCE ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle B of title IV of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17081 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 424. SEPARATE SPACES WITH HIGH-PERFORMANCE ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURES.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) HIGH-PERFORMANCE ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURE.—The term 'high-performance energy efficiency measure' means a technology, product, or practice that will result in substantial operational cost savings by reducing energy consumption and utility costs.

''(2) SEPARATE SPACES.—The term 'separate spaces' means areas within a commercial building that are leased or otherwise occupied by a tenant or other occupant for a period of time pursuant to the terms of a written agreement.

''(b) STUDY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary, acting through the Assistant Secretary of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, shall complete a study on the feasibility of—

''(A) significantly improving energy efficiency in commercial buildings through the design and construction, by owners and tenants, of separate spaces with high-performance energy efficiency measures; and

''(B) encouraging owners and tenants to implement high-performance energy efficiency measures in separate spaces.

''(2) SCOPE.—The study shall, at a minimum, include—

''(A) descriptions of—

''(i) high-performance energy efficiency measures that should be considered as part of the initial design and construction of separate spaces;

''(ii) processes that owners, tenants, architects, and engineers may replicate when designing and constructing separate spaces with high-performance energy efficiency measures;

''(iii) policies and best practices to achieve reductions in energy intensities for lighting, plug loads, heating, cooling, cooking, laundry, and other systems to satisfy the needs of the commercial building tenant;

''(iv) return on investment and payback analyses of the incremental cost and projected energy savings of the proposed set of high-performance energy efficiency measures, including consideration of available incentives;

''(v) models and simulation methods that predict the quantity of energy used by separate spaces with high-performance energy efficiency measures and that compare that predicted quantity to the quantity of energy used by separate spaces without high-performance energy efficiency measures but that otherwise comply with applicable building code requirements;

''(vi) measurement and verification platforms demonstrating actual energy use of high-performance energy efficiency measures installed in separate spaces, and whether such measures generate the savings intended in the initial design and construction of the separate spaces;

''(vii) best practices that encourage an integrated approach to designing and constructing separate spaces to perform at optimum energy efficiency in conjunction with the central systems of a commercial building; and

''(viii) any impact on employment resulting from the design and construction of separate spaces with high-performance energy efficiency measures; and

''(B) case studies reporting economic and energy savings returns in the design and construction of separate spaces with high-performance energy efficiency measures.

''(3) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall publish a notice in the Federal Register requesting public comments regarding effective methods, measures, and practices for the design and construction of separate spaces with high-performance energy efficiency measures.

''(4) PUBLICATION.—The Secretary shall publish the study on the website of the Department of Energy.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 423 the following new item:

''Sec. 424. Separate spaces with high-performance energy efficiency measures.''.

SEC. 104. TENANT STAR PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle B of title IV of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17081 et seq.) (as amended by section 3) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 425. TENANT STAR PROGRAM.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) HIGH-PERFORMANCE ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURE.—The term 'high-performance energy efficiency measure' has the meaning given the term in section 424.

''(2) SEPARATE SPACES.—The term 'separate spaces' has the meaning given the term in section 424.

''(b) TENANT STAR.—The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, shall develop a voluntary program within the Energy Star program established by section 324A of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6294a), which may be known as Tenant Star, to promote energy efficiency in separate spaces leased by tenants or otherwise occupied within commercial buildings.

''(c) EXPANDING SURVEY DATA.—The Secretary of Energy, acting through the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration, shall—

''(1) collect, through each Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey of the Energy Information Administration that is conducted after the date of enactment of this section, data on—

''(A) categories of building occupancy that are known to consume significant quantities of energy, such as occupancy by data centers, trading floors, and restaurants; and

''(B) other aspects of the property, building operation, or building occupancy determined by the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration, in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, to be relevant in lowering energy consumption;

''(2) with respect to the first Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey conducted after the date of enactment of this section, to the extent full compliance with the requirements of paragraph (1) is not feasible, conduct activities to develop the capability to collect such data and begin to collect such data; and

''(3) make data collected under paragraphs (1) and (2) available to the public in aggregated form and provide such data, and any associated results, to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency for use in accordance with subsection (d).

''(d) RECOGNITION OF OWNERS AND TENANTS.—

''(1) OCCUPANCY-BASED RECOGNITION.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which sufficient data is received pursuant to subsection (c), the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall, following an opportunity for public notice and comment—

''(A) in a manner similar to the Energy Star rating system for commercial buildings, develop policies and procedures to recognize tenants in commercial buildings that voluntarily achieve high levels of energy efficiency in separate spaces;

''(B) establish building occupancy categories eligible for Tenant Star recognition based on the data collected under subsection (c) and any other appropriate data sources; and

''(C) consider other forms of recognition for commercial building tenants or other occupants that lower energy consumption in separate spaces.

''(2) DESIGN- AND CONSTRUCTION-BASED RECOGNITION.—After the study required by section 424(b) is completed, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, in consultation with the Secretary and following an opportunity for public notice and comment, may develop a voluntary program to recognize commercial building owners and tenants that use high-performance energy efficiency measures in the design and construction of separate spaces.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 424 (as added by section 3(b)) the following new item:

''Sec. 425. Tenant Star program.''.

TITLE II—GRID-ENABLED WATER HEATERS

SEC. 201. GRID-ENABLED WATER HEATERS.

Part B of title III of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6291 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 325(e) (42 U.S.C. 6295(e)), by adding at the end the following:

''(6) ADDITIONAL STANDARDS FOR GRID-ENABLED WATER HEATERS.—

''(A) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

''(i) ACTIVATION LOCK.—The term 'activation lock' means a control mechanism (either a physical device directly on the water heater or a control system integrated into the water heater) that is locked by default and contains a physical, software, or digital communication that must be activated with an activation key to enable the product to operate at its designed specifications and capabilities and without which activation the product will provide not greater than 50 percent of the rated first hour delivery of hot water certified by the manufacturer.

''(ii) GRID-ENABLED WATER HEATER.—The term 'grid-enabled water heater' means an electric resistance water heater that—

''(I) has a rated storage tank volume of more than 75 gallons;

''(II) is manufactured on or after April 16, 2015;

''(III) has—

''(aa) an energy factor of not less than 1.061 minus the product obtained by multiplying—

''(AA) the rated storage volume of the tank, expressed in gallons; and

''(BB) 0.00168; or

''(bb) an equivalent alternative standard prescribed by the Secretary and developed pursuant to paragraph (5)(E);

''(IV) is equipped at the point of manufacture with an activation lock; and

''(V) bears a permanent label applied by the manufacturer that—

''(aa) is made of material not adversely affected by water;

''(bb) is attached by means of non-water-soluble adhesive; and

''(cc) advises purchasers and end-users of the intended and appropriate use of the product with the following notice printed in 16.5 point Arial Narrow Bold font:

'' 'IMPORTANT INFORMATION: This water heater is intended only for use as part of an electric thermal storage or demand response program. It will not provide adequate hot water unless enrolled in such a program and activated by your utility company or another program operator. Confirm the availability of a program in your local area before purchasing or installing this product.'.

''(B) REQUIREMENT.—The manufacturer or private labeler shall provide the activation key for a grid-enabled water heater only to a utility or other company that operates an electric thermal storage or demand response program that uses such a grid-enabled water heater.

''(C) REPORTS.—

''(i) MANUFACTURERS.—The Secretary shall require each manufacturer of grid-enabled water heaters to report to the Secretary annually the quantity of grid-enabled water heaters that the manufacturer ships each year.

''(ii) OPERATORS.—The Secretary shall require utilities and other demand response and thermal storage program operators to report annually the quantity of grid-enabled water heaters activated for their programs using forms of the Energy Information Agency or using such other mechanism that the Secretary determines appropriate after an opportunity for notice and comment.

''(iii) CONFIDENTIALITY REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall treat shipment data reported by manufacturers as confidential business information.

''(D) PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—In 2017 and 2019, the Secretary shall publish an analysis of the data collected under subparagraph (C) to assess the extent to which shipped products are put into use in demand response and thermal storage programs.

''(ii) PREVENTION OF PRODUCT DIVERSION.—If the Secretary determines that sales of grid-enabled water heaters exceed by 15 percent or greater the quantity of such products activated for use in demand response and thermal storage programs annually, the Secretary shall, after opportunity for notice and comment, establish procedures to prevent product diversion for non-program purposes.

''(E) COMPLIANCE.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraphs (A) through (D) shall remain in effect until the Secretary determines under this section that—

''(I) grid-enabled water heaters do not require a separate efficiency requirement; or

''(II) sales of grid-enabled water heaters exceed by 15 percent or greater the quantity of such products activated for use in demand response and thermal storage programs annually and procedures to prevent product diversion for non-program purposes would not be adequate to prevent such product diversion.

''(ii) EFFECTIVE DATE.—If the Secretary exercises the authority described in clause (i) or amends the efficiency requirement for grid-enabled water heaters, that action will take effect on the date described in subsection (m)(4)(A)(ii).

''(iii) CONSIDERATION.—In carrying out this section with respect to electric water heaters, the Secretary shall consider the impact on thermal storage and demand response programs, including any impact on energy savings, electric bills, peak load reduction, electric reliability, integration of renewable resources, and the environment.

''(iv) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out this paragraph, the Secretary shall require that grid-enabled water heaters be equipped with communication capability to enable the grid-enabled water heaters to participate in ancillary services programs if the Secretary determines that the technology is available, practical, and cost-effective.'';

(2) in section 332(a) (42 U.S.C. 6302(a))—

(A) in paragraph (5), by striking ''or'' at the end;

(B) in the first paragraph (6), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(C) by redesignating the second paragraph (6) as paragraph (7);

(D) in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (7) (as so redesignated), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; or''; and

(E) by adding at the end the following:

''(8) for any person to—

''(A) activate an activation lock for a grid-enabled water heater with knowledge that such water heater is not used as part of an electric thermal storage or demand response program;

''(B) distribute an activation key for a grid-enabled water heater with knowledge that such activation key will be used to activate a grid-enabled water heater that is not used as part of an electric thermal storage or demand response program;

''(C) otherwise enable a grid-enabled water heater to operate at its designed specification and capabilities with knowledge that such water heater is not used as part of an electric thermal storage or demand response program; or

''(D) knowingly remove or render illegible the label of a grid-enabled water heater described in section 325(e)(6)(A)(ii)(V).'';

(3) in section 333(a) (42 U.S.C. 6303(a))—

(A) by striking ''section 332(a)(5)'' and inserting ''paragraph (5), (6), (7), or (8) of section 332(a)''; and

(B) by striking ''paragraph (1), (2), or (5) of section 332(a)'' and inserting ''paragraph (1), (2), (5), (6), (7), or (8) of section 332(a)''; and

(4) in section 334 (42 U.S.C. 6304)—

(A) by striking ''section 332(a)(5)'' and inserting ''paragraph (5), (6), (7), or (8) of section 332(a)''; and

(B) by striking ''section 332(a)(6)'' and inserting ''section 332(a)(7)''.

TITLE III—ENERGY EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGY

SEC. 301. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Energy Efficient Government Technology Act''.

SEC. 302. ENERGY-EFFICIENT AND ENERGY-SAVING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES.

Subtitle C of title V of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–140; 121 Stat. 1661) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 530. ENERGY-EFFICIENT AND ENERGY-SAVING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) DIRECTOR.—The term 'Director' means the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

''(2) INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.—The term 'information technology' has the meaning given that term in section 11101 of title 40, United States Code.

''(b) DEVELOPMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, each Federal agency shall coordinate with the Director, the Secretary, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to develop an implementation strategy (that includes best practices and measurement and verification techniques) for the maintenance, purchase, and use by the Federal agency of energy-efficient and energy-saving

information technologies, taking into consideration the performance goals established under subsection (d).

''(c) ADMINISTRATION.—In developing an implementation strategy under subsection (b), each Federal agency shall consider—

''(1) advanced metering infrastructure;

''(2) energy-efficient data center strategies and methods of increasing asset and infrastructure utilization;

''(3) advanced power management tools;

''(4) building information modeling, including building energy management;

''(5) secure telework and travel substitution tools; and

''(6) mechanisms to ensure that the agency realizes the energy cost savings brought about through increased efficiency and utilization.

''(d) PERFORMANCE GOALS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Director, in consultation with the Secretary, shall establish performance goals for evaluating the efforts of Federal agencies in improving the maintenance, purchase, and use of energy-efficient and energy-saving information technology.

''(2) BEST PRACTICES.—The Chief Information Officers Council established under section 3603 of title 44, United States Code, shall recommend best practices for the attainment of the performance goals, which shall include Federal agency consideration of the use of—

''(A) energy savings performance contracting; and

''(B) utility energy services contracting.

''(e) REPORTS.—

''(1) AGENCY REPORTS.—Each Federal agency shall include in the report of the agency under section 527 a description of the efforts and results of the agency under this section.

''(2) OMB GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY REPORTS AND SCORECARDS.—Effective beginning not later than October 1, 2015, the Director shall include in the annual report and scorecard of the Director required under section 528 a description of the efforts and results of Federal agencies under this section.''.

SEC. 303. ENERGY EFFICIENT DATA CENTERS.

Section 453 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17112) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (b)(3); and

(2) by striking subsections (c) through (g) and inserting the following:

''(c) STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT.—The Secretary and the Administrator shall carry out subsection (b) in collaboration with information technology industry and other key stakeholders, with the goal of producing results that accurately reflect the best knowledge in the most pertinent domains. In such collaboration, the Secretary and the Administrator shall pay particular attention to organizations that—

''(1) have members with expertise in energy efficiency and in the development, operation, and functionality of data centers, information technology equipment, and software, such as representatives of hardware manufacturers, data center operators, and facility managers;

''(2) obtain and address input from Department of Energy National Laboratories or any college, university, research institution, industry association, company, or public interest group with applicable expertise;

''(3) follow—

''(A) commonly accepted procedures for the development of specifications; and

''(B) accredited standards development processes; and

''(4) have a mission to promote energy efficiency for data centers and information technology.

''(d) MEASUREMENTS AND SPECIFICATIONS.—The Secretary and the Administrator shall consider and assess the adequacy of the specifications, measurements, and benchmarks described in subsection (b) for use by the Federal Energy Management Program, the Energy Star Program, and other efficiency programs of the Department of Energy or the Environmental Protection Agency.

''(e) STUDY.—The Secretary, in collaboration with the Administrator, shall, not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the Energy Efficient Government Technology Act, make available to the public an update to the Report to Congress on Server and Data Center Energy Efficiency published on August 2, 2007, under section 1 of Public Law 109–431 (120 Stat. 2920), that provides—

''(1) a comparison and gap analysis of the estimates and projections contained in the original report with new data regarding the period from 2007 through 2014;

''(2) an analysis considering the impact of information technologies, to include virtualization and cloud computing, in the public and private sectors;

''(3) an evaluation of the impact of the combination of cloud platforms, mobile devices, social media, and big data on data center energy usage; and

''(4) updated projections and recommendations for best practices through fiscal year 2020.

''(f) DATA CENTER ENERGY PRACTITIONER PROGRAM.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall maintain a data center energy practitioner program that leads to the certification of energy practitioners qualified to evaluate the energy usage and efficiency opportunities in Federal data centers. Each Federal agency shall consider having the data centers of the agency evaluated every 4 years by energy practitioners certified pursuant to such program, whenever practicable using certified practitioners employed by the agency.

''(g) OPEN DATA INITIATIVE.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders and the Office of Management and Budget, shall establish an open data initiative for Federal data center energy usage data, with the purpose of making such data available and accessible in a manner that encourages further data center innovation, optimization, and consolidation. In establishing the initiative, the Secretary shall consider the use of the online Data Center Maturity Model.

''(h) INTERNATIONAL SPECIFICATIONS AND METRICS.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders, shall actively participate in efforts to harmonize global specifications and metrics for data center energy efficiency.

''(i) DATA CENTER UTILIZATION METRIC.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders, shall facilitate in the development of an efficiency metric that measures the energy efficiency of a data center (including equipment and facilities).

''(j) PROTECTION OF PROPRIETARY INFORMATION.—The Secretary and the Administrator shall not disclose any proprietary information or trade secrets provided by any individual or company for the purposes of carrying out this section or the programs and initiatives established under this section.''.

TITLE IV—ENERGY INFORMATION FOR COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

SEC. 401. ENERGY INFORMATION FOR COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS.

(a) REQUIREMENT OF BENCHMARKING AND DISCLOSURE FOR LEASING BUILDINGS WITHOUT ENERGY STAR LABELS.—Section 435(b)(2) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17091(b)(2)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''paragraph (2)'' and inserting ''paragraph (1)''; and

(2) by striking ''signing the contract,'' and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting the following:

''signing the contract, the following requirements are met:

''(A) The space is renovated for all energy efficiency and conservation improvements that would be cost effective over the life of the lease, including improvements in lighting, windows, and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems.

''(B)(i) Subject to clause (ii), the space is benchmarked under a nationally recognized, online, free benchmarking program, with public disclosure, unless the space is a space for which owners cannot access whole building utility consumption data, including spaces—

''(I) that are located in States with privacy laws that provide that utilities shall not provide such aggregated information to multitenant building owners; and

''(II) for which tenants do not provide energy consumption information to the commercial building owner in response to a request from the building owner.

''(ii) A Federal agency that is a tenant of the space shall provide to the building owner, or authorize the owner to obtain from the utility, the energy consumption information of the space for the benchmarking and disclosure required by this subparagraph.''.

(b) STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Energy, in collaboration with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, shall complete a study—

(A) on the impact of—

(i) State and local performance benchmarking and disclosure policies, and any associated building efficiency policies, for commercial and multifamily buildings; and

(ii) programs and systems in which utilities provide aggregated information regarding whole building energy consumption and usage information to owners of multitenant commercial, residential, and mixed-use buildings;

(B) that identifies best practice policy approaches studied under subparagraph (A) that have resulted in the greatest improvements in building energy efficiency; and

(C) that considers—

(i) compliance rates and the benefits and costs of the policies and programs on building owners, utilities, tenants, and other parties;

(ii) utility practices, programs, and systems that provide aggregated energy consumption information to multitenant building owners, and the impact of public utility commissions and State privacy laws on those practices, programs, and systems;

(iii) exceptions to compliance in existing laws where building owners are not able to gather or access whole building energy information from tenants or utilities;

(iv) the treatment of buildings with—

(I) multiple uses;

(II) uses for which baseline information is not available; and

(III) uses that require high levels of energy intensities, such as data centers, trading floors, and televisions studios;

(v) implementation practices, including disclosure methods and phase-in of compliance;

(vi) the safety and security of benchmarking tools offered by government agencies, and the resiliency of those tools against cyber-attacks; and

(vii) international experiences with regard to building benchmarking and disclosure

laws and data aggregation for multitenant buildings.

(2) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—At the conclusion of the study, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report on the results of the study.

(c) CREATION AND MAINTENANCE OF DATABASE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act and following opportunity for public notice and comment, the Secretary of Energy, in coordination with other relevant agencies, shall maintain, and if necessary create, a database for the purpose of storing and making available public energy-related information on commercial and multifamily buildings, including—

(A) data provided under Federal, State, local, and other laws or programs regarding building benchmarking and energy information disclosure;

(B) information on buildings that have disclosed energy ratings and certifications; and

(C) energy-related information on buildings provided voluntarily by the owners of the buildings, only in an anonymous form unless the owner provides otherwise.

(2) COMPLEMENTARY PROGRAMS.—The database maintained pursuant to paragraph (1) shall complement and not duplicate the functions of the Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star Portfolio Manager tool.

(d) INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS.—The Secretary of Energy shall seek input from stakeholders to maximize the effectiveness of the actions taken under this section.

(e) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 2 years thereafter, the Secretary of Energy shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report on the progress made in complying with this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The benefits of energy efficiency are something that both the Republicans and Democrats agree on as evidenced by the modest but robust package we are considering today. Reducing waste and consuming less energy are commonsense strategies to cut costs and address U.S. energy demand.

I want to thank Mr. WELCH and Mr. MCKINLEY for their leadership on this energy efficiency bill. Both they and their staffs have worked very hard on this legislation as have the committee staffs, both Democrat and Republican.

The U.S. has steadily improved its energy productivity as a result of advances in technology, driven primarily by private sector innovation. In particular, the industrial and manufacturing sectors have undertaken significant efforts to improve efficiency and reap the resulting economic benefits. The Energy Efficiency Improvement Act of 2014 supports these ongoing efforts by spurring the use of energy efficiency technologies and processes in the commercial, industrial, and public sectors of our economy. The legislation saves consumers money through lowered energy consumption, helps create jobs, makes our country more energy independent, and will produce associated environmental benefits. Critically, this bill will make the country's largest energy user, the Federal Government, more efficient, thereby saving taxpayer money.

I am delighted that we have this bill on the floor today. I look forward to working with the Members of the body to make sure that we pass this legislation, and I would urge their support.

I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, February 26, 2014.

Hon. BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHUSTER, Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 2126, the "Better Buildings Act of 2013." As you noted, there are provisions of H.R. 2126 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and I appreciate your willingness to forgo action on the bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

I agree that your decision should not alter or diminish the jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure with respect to the appointment of conferees or any future claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation, and I will support the appointment of Members of the Committee to any conference committee on such provisions.

I will include a copy of your letter and this response in the Congressional Record during consideration of H.R. 2126 on the House floor.

Sincerely,

FRED UPTON,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,
Washington, DC, February 26, 2014.

Hon. FRED UPTON,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I write concerning H.R. 2126, the Better Buildings Act of 2013, as ordered reported by the Committee on Energy and Commerce. There are certain provisions in the legislation that fall within. the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

In order to expedite this legislation for floor consideration, the Committee will forgo action on this bill. However, this is conditional on our mutual understanding that forgoing consideration of the bill does not alter or diminish the jurisdiction of the Committee with respect to the appointment of conferees or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation. I request you urge the Speaker to name members of the Committee to any conference committee named to consider such provisions.

Please place a copy of this letter and your response acknowledging our jurisdictional interest into the Congressional Record during consideration of the measure on the House Floor.

Sincerely,

BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Chairman UPTON, Chairman WHITFIELD, and Ranking Members WAXMAN and RUSH, I thank all of you for working with us to move this bipartisan legislation today.

Mr. WHITFIELD, I want to particularly thank you for your leadership on the subcommittee.

Thank you as well to my colleague DAVID MCKINLEY for partnering with me on this issue. Mr. MCKINLEY has an extraordinary background as an engineer and small business owner. He has real practical knowledge that has been extremely helpful, and he has brought invaluable expertise to our committee. I am grateful to him, and this whole body should be grateful to him for his partnership.

The bill today also includes some very good ideas advanced by other Members of Congress: Representatives ESHOO, ROGERS, MATHESON, LATTA, and CASTOR. I thank all of them for their leadership on this issue.

Lastly, I want to thank House leaders, especially Majority Leader CANTOR. He and his staff—Steve Stombres—have been enormously cooperative in dealing with some of the thorny problems that arise whenever there is a complicated piece of legislation to be considered. So thank you.

Like Mr. WHITFIELD, I have long believed that energy efficiency is an area in which we have common ground in what is too often a very divided Congress.

Mr. WHITFIELD, I thank you for focusing on that common ground.

Why is it so good?

Because saving energy does three things. It creates jobs. All of the energy efficiency labor is done by local folks who need work. It creates manufacturing jobs because 90 percent of the materials used in energy efficiency are manufactured in this country. It saves money and it improves the environment.

□ 1530

So we can, and do, disagree in this Congress on the causes of climate change and the best fuel mix to meet America's energy demands, but we can all agree that less is more. Whatever your fuel source, if you use less, you save money, and that is good for all of us concerned.

We can also agree that creating demand for American-made energy-efficient products will also create good

jobs. In energy efficiency, our cheapest fuel requires, as I said, labor and manufactured goods that are made in America.

We can also all agree that cutting the energy bills of homeowners, businesses, and the Federal Government—therefore, the taxpayer—is a very good thing.

Mr. Speaker, Vermont, which I represent, has long been a leader in energy efficiency. My home State was the first to set up what was called an energy efficiency utility. That utility, Efficiency Vermont, has done outstanding work for the past 20 years.

Basically, what it acknowledges and understands is that a kilowatt saved is a cost avoided. Last year alone, Efficiency Vermont's work yielded a lifetime customer savings of $206 million for our small State in Vermont.

The Energy Efficiency Improvement Act is an important first step in making America more energy efficient. It includes the Better Buildings Act, also known as Tenant Star, which will drive private sector innovation in energy efficiency.

By the way, again, Mr. WHITFIELD, I appreciate this.

This is a public-private partnership. This is not a prescriptive arrangement. It requires good policy at the Federal level, with cooperation and opportunity-seizing at the private level.

Homes and buildings consume 40 percent of our energy in the United States. It is really huge. In commercial buildings, owners report that tenants consume up to 50 percent or more of the total energy output.

One of the challenges our commercial building owners and developers face has been the issue of split incentives. Building owners and renters are not always on the same page when it comes to energy performance. Part of the problem is that only one party is paying the energy bill. The other part of the problem is that, while we recognize energy efficient buildings through the Energy Star program, we have no similar recognition program for tenant spaces.

Our bill creates a voluntary Tenant Star recognition program for separate spaces in commercial buildings. When we combine Energy Star buildings with Tenant Star rentals, we can optimize energy efficiency in shortened payback periods.

A good example of this synergy can be found in Energy Star-certified Vermont Innovation Center, located in Burlington, Vermont. The Vermont Energy Investment Corporation, or VEIC, has its office in that building. VEIC took aggressive action to optimize the efficiency of its tenant space within the building. It converted the overhead fluorescent lighting to highly efficient LEDs and applied 6 inches of spray foam insulation to the exterior wells.

Making these improvements in an Energy Star building optimized an already efficient tenant space, but VEIC expects to save nearly $11,000 a year in energy savings. Where I come from, that is real money.

However, there is no recognition program for these improvements, and we don't know what else VEIC could be doing to increase energy savings. Under this bill, we will study the best ways to optimize commercial tenant spaces and then recognize those spaces with a new Tenant Star label.

By combining energy efficient tenant build-out with Energy Star buildings, we will double down on a successful program and optimize energy savings in commercial buildings.

In addition to Tenant Star, this legislation includes three other important energy provisions. Again, I thank Mr. WHITFIELD for his leadership in allowing other good ideas to be part of this legislation.

First, it is going to increase the energy efficiency of Federal Government data centers. They are huge energy consumers. Data centers use massive amounts of energy. This legislation will finally begin to address the enormous Federal energy bill for those facilities.

Second, this bill addresses a serious regulatory problem involving large-scale water heaters.

Sometimes we have an argument back and forth about regulations. What I love about this bill, among other things, is we are fixing a problem, not just fighting about it.

It is going to make needed changes to energy efficiency standards for large water heaters that are used in demand response programs. These water heaters act as residential energy storage devices and allow utilities to curb energy demand during peak hours.

So we are giving some of our rural electric cooperatives tools they need to keep the cost and energy demand down.

Finally, the bill will disclose the amount of energy consumed in federally leased buildings and begin benchmarking these buildings.

The Energy Efficiency Improvement Act, comprised of these four components, is an important first step towards energy efficiency, but more work remains. In the coming weeks, I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass the McKinley-Welch-Shaheen-Portman legislation, which will establish national model building codes. We also need to pass legislation to encourage performance contracting in Federal buildings and to streamline the Federal green schools project.

Energy efficiency, as Mr. WHITFIELD said, Mr. Speaker, is a bipartisan issue. I am extremely encouraged by the steps we are taking today. I look forward to working with the chairman, ranking member, and House leaders to bring more bills to the floor in the coming weeks.

I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. I want to thank the gentleman for his remarks. Also, I certainly want to thank Ms. ESHOO of California for the leadership she's had on this position, as well as our chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, Mr. UPTON.

At this time I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON).

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, today, we continue our pursuit of a true all-of-the-above energy policy as the House considers H.R. 2126, the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act. I am very pleased that this bill combines four individual bipartisan proposals developed by members of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Energy efficiency measures are some of the simplest and most affordable methods to address U.S. energy demand and lower costs, but significant energy efficiency opportunities and challenges certainly remain. This legislative package helps embrace these opportunities and meet many challenges to advance U.S. energy goals.

Using a voluntary, market-driven approach, this bipartisan legislation will help harness new technologies and support private sector innovation to develop more efficient ways of utilizing energy.

H.R. 2126 also seeks to improve Federal energy efficiency, a critical initiative, given that the Federal Government is the Nation's largest user of energy. Utilizing energy savings techniques can significantly reduce the amount of U.S. taxpayer dollars spent on Federal energy costs.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to American energy, everything needs to be on the table: coal, nuclear, natural gas, hydro, wind, solar—you name it, and yes, improving energy efficiency is an important part of the all-of-the-above equation.

The passage of this important energy efficiency bill will help us as we continue to work together on a bipartisan basis in the coming months and years to tackle the many energy challenges facing the Nation. We have a lot of work to do.

Basically, what this bill does is takes four individual bills that we had. One was led by the really good work of Mr. WELCH and Mr. MCKINLEY to establish a Tenant Star program to voluntarily certify within Energy Star, which would promote energy efficiency.

It takes a Whitfield bill on grid-enabled water heaters. I commend Ms. ESHOO and MIKE ROGERS—again, a bipartisan combination—in adding more energy efficient savings technologies in a major way to help us.

It also takes a Castor bill on energy information for commercial buildings.

Together, many of us sat down with the then-chairman of the Senate Energy Committee, Mr. WYDEN, about a year ago on things that we could work on together, and we have proved it with this legislation. These bills had

unanimous support within our committee. We worked together. Ultimately, it is going to help the American consumer and the Federal Government—again, the largest user of electricity—and shows we can get things done.

So we have Mr. WELCH, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. WHITFIELD, MIKE ROGERS, Ms. CASTOR, and also Mr. WAXMAN and his staff, too. I know that he wishes he was on the floor. Together, we really did get this thing worked out in a way that the American public would be certainly very proud of.

I know that we have lost Mr. WYDEN. He has moved to another committee, but I would hope that a strong vote this afternoon would send a pretty good message to the Senate that in fact they can embrace these bills.

A week or two ago, the majority leader said something along the lines of he wanted to pick a number of issues we can work on together and get them out of the way and get them to the President's desk. These are pretty good bills. I would like to think that once we pass these, the new leadership there in the Senate Energy Committee could simply move these bills from the desk and get them to the President's desk in an expeditious way.

So I want to conclude by thanking my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for developing this legislation that in fact we are supporting. I would encourage all of my colleagues to stand up for an all-of-the-above energy policy and support passage of the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO).

Ms. ESHOO. I thank my friend and my colleague for yielding. I thank him for the work that he has done, as well as Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. MCKINLEY, Ms. CASTOR, and staff on both sides of the aisle. It feels good to come to the floor to speak on a package of bills that are bipartisan and that are really going to produce something for our country and help move us forward.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today in support of the package of these four bipartisan energy efficiency bills because they are going to save taxpayer dollars. They are very important.

Title III of this legislation is a bill that I authored with Congressman MIKE ROGERS of Michigan to make the Federal Government's IT and data centers more energy efficient. We have been at this for a long time. By requiring Federal agencies to utilize the best technologies and energy management strategies, our legislation will reduce the Federal Government's energy use, save taxpayer dollars, and importantly, set the standard for the private sector.

While we now routinely hear a lot about data centers, that was not the case when we started out examining this issue a decade ago. Back then, I had to explain to colleagues what a data center was. Today, just about everybody understands that data centers are a critical part of our national infrastructure and are found in nearly every sector of our economy.

In 2005, I authored language in the Energy Policy Act that mandated an EPA study relative to energy use and energy costs of data centers. The report was transmitted to Congress in 2007 and served as a driver of both private and public investment in energy efficiency. Based on widespread agreement across government, industry, and academia, the bill before us today requires an update to that 2007 report.

Data centers can be extremely energy inefficient. Experts estimate that most data centers could slash their energy use by 80 to 90 percent. That really takes our collective breath away. There are enormous opportunities in this by simply implementing existing technologies and best practices.

So we can do this. We can get this done.

While several companies in my Silicon Valley district have taken the lead in developing efficient, sustainable data centers, we can do much better across the private sector and the Federal Government.

□ 1545

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. WELCH. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. ESHOO. I thank the gentleman.

The Federal Government is the Nation's largest landowner, largest employer, and largest energy user, and so we should lead by example in improving the energy efficiency of our own data centers within the Federal Government.

So the bill that Mr. ROGERS and I have embedded in this package requires Federal agencies to do some really rather simple things that are going to lead to terrific outcomes. They need to develop plans to use more energy-efficient technologies and best practices, and require periodic evaluation of Federal data centers for energy efficiency.

I want to thank Chairman UPTON, Ranking Member WAXMAN, the staffs from both sides of the aisle, the Members that are part of the legislation that is part of this bipartisan package.

And I also want to salute Paul Beck, who serves on my staff in my office, who has really been the wind beneath the sails of this bill. He has lived and breathed efficiency in data centers day in and day out.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY), who is the author of title I of this legislation.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2126.

While there are many differing views in Congress, there is one common ground, and that is energy efficiency. Finding ways to use energy more efficiently is simply common sense.

This legislation will provide this country with a market-driven, voluntary, best practice approach to reduce energy consumption. It is an area where Republicans and Democrats can work together efficiently. That is why PETER WELCH and I have developed a wonderful working relationship and developed an issue on energy that crosses this and other pieces of legislation.

As one of just two engineers in Congress, and having spent nearly 50 years in the construction industry, I understand what steps we need to take to make our buildings more efficient. That is why we brought together a broad coalition of support for this legislation, supported by everyone from manufacturers, restaurants, contractors, labor, environmental groups. Even the gaming industry is supporting this legislation. It is estimated to lower energy costs by over $2 billion and result in reduced carbon emissions by nearly 12 million tons. It helps move our Nation closer to energy independence.

I would like to thank Chairman UPTON and Ranking Member WAXMAN for allowing this bipartisan bill to come to the floor, and Congressman WHITFIELD for helping out on all the legislation, as well as Mr. WELCH.

Engineers know how to make buildings operate more efficiently. Maybe our next step would be to make Congress run more efficiently.

I urge all my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is going to take a lot more engineers to get this place operating a lot better, but this was a step.

Mr. WHITFIELD wasn't here when I was bragging on him, Mr. Speaker. You have got that practical knowledge from his year of experience in construction and that engineering background.

But here is the other thing. There is a big debate about carbon emissions. I happen to be someone who thinks it is a very, very serious problem. But if we—even under the Waxman-Markey bill, which passed the House and then did not pass the Senate, with a goal of reduction of 80 percent of carbon emissions by 2050, 40 percent were going to be achieved through energy efficiency. So this is a really big deal.

There are questions about a lot of things on energy policy, but where we do have this common ground with significant leadership on both sides of the aisle, that energy efficiency is an approach that really makes sense, then we can and should do it. So I am very grateful to all concerned in pulling together to take the first really solid step towards embracing an energy efficiency agenda as part of an all-of-the-above strategy on energy.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. HIMES).

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I rise briefly just to salute the leadership of Representative MCKINLEY and my good friend from Vermont, PETER WELCH, for a bill which does some spectacular

things. Specifically, it really enshrines the idea that the cheapest and cleanest energy that we have is that energy which we conserve and don't use, that we make available for the future.

This—and I draw on my history now of building affordable housing in a green fashion—is a real win-win. It means that people are paying lower utility bills if they employ the methods that will be encouraged by this bill. It means that we are putting less carbon in the atmosphere, and this coming from somebody recently down from Connecticut where we have experienced, in the last several years, climate problems unlike any that we have ever seen. And of course, we are doing the right thing by the future.

This is also, in a challenging time for this Chamber, a remarkable example of Democrats and Republicans working together to achieve something that will benefit not just the people in this Chamber, but will benefit the country and future generations. This is something we should build on. There is so much more we can do with respect to reconfiguring our economy and our industry and our residences so that they are clean and driven by cheap, sustainable, American energy.

So, Mr. Speaker, I close now just as I opened, by thanking Representative MCKINLEY and Representative WELCH for their tremendous leadership and say that I very much look forward to supporting this bill later on today.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, we do not have any more speakers, so I would reserve the balance of my time if the gentleman wants to proceed.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Vermont has 4½ minutes remaining.

Mr. WELCH. Well, I will just close briefly. I don't believe we have any other speakers.

Again, there are several things here:

One is the wisdom of an energy efficiency policy, less is more; and whether you are consuming oil or solar, if you use less, you are going to save money. It is good for the bottom line;

Second, any energy efficiency means that we are going to keep in the ground for future use any other fuels that we may need down the road;

Third, any energy efficiency requires implementation of energy efficiency retrofits. That is local labor, good jobs, and the use of locally manufactured products;

Fourth, energy efficiency means that we do not have to build more generating capacity in order to generate. That saves money;

Fifth, what it does is it cuts down on carbon emissions. It is all a really good thing.

Then finally, several speakers have referred to Congress, and we all know we have had our challenges here, and it is a function, to some extent, of real debates among the American people that we reflect to some extent. We can't get out of our own way sometimes with some of our rules. But what we know is that, at the end the day, this institution has to be a problem-solving institution that works for the American people. And what we have done here, with Mr. UPTON and Mr. WHITFIELD being the leaders with the responsible positions, is focused on areas where we agree. And they are meaningful areas. It is not a split-the-difference type of deal where we have just shaved so much off that it really is not significant. What we have done is put aside areas where we have real disagreement and haven't reached consensus and then doubled down on that area of efficiency where there is common ground.

We have taken good ideas, whether they have been offered by a Republican or a Democrat, and we have kept disciplined to have this legislation be about efficiency and a policy that is going to work for the American people, and we haven't turned it, either side, into a political Christmas tree that allows us to make some extraneous points. In my view, I think we need to do more of that.

I was very heartened in Congress when we had a budget agreement that was reached with the leadership of PAUL RYAN in the House and Senator MURRAY in the Senate. I was happy we had an appropriations bill that did reflect a lot of give-and-take on both sides, and I was very pleased we had a farm bill. Again, lots of things to debate in that farm bill, but we need a 5-year farm bill for the people.

And now, on energy, we finally pass something that both sides can legitimately be proud of because it is real policy. It is important policy that is going to be beneficial to the bottom line to the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to add on the words of the gentleman from Vermont, first of all, once again, just to say how much we enjoyed working with him and the others on this important legislation.

We do firmly believe that the American people will benefit from this. We all recognize that energy is one of the components that goes a long way in determining how competitive America can be in the global marketplace, and any time you can improve efficiency, you improve that competitiveness. So I would urge all of our Members to support H.R. 2126, the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act of 2014.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today, I urge the House of Representatives to pass this bipartisan energy efficiency legislation, the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act of 2014, that would take a best practices approach to achieving optimal performance levels in commercial buildings and identify energy efficiency improvements in federal government data centers and leased buildings. This piece of legislation will save energy, save taxpayer dollars, lower consumers' energy bills and reduce harmful pollution.

I want to thank Chairman UPTON and Ranking Member WAXMAN of the Energy and Commerce Committee and Chairman WHITFIELD and Ranking Member RUSH of the Energy and Power Subcommittee for including my bill, H.R. 3820, a bill to encourage benchmarking and disclosure of energy information in commercial buildings, as Title IV of the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act.

Existing federal law requires benchmarking of federally owned buildings. Benchmarking is a practice that allows building owners to assess the energy use of their buildings and compare their performance to similar buildings. My bill builds on existing law by requiring federally leased buildings to benchmark and disclose their energy usage data, where practical.

Benchmarking helps owners identify buildings that can most benefit from energy upgrades. The federal Energy Star Buildings program has encouraged benchmarking for many years and the Environmental Protection Agency estimates that this program has benchmarked more than 185 million square feet of U.S. commercial floor space, resulting in average energy savings of about 5 percent in these buildings.

My bill requires a benchmarking study for commercial and multi-family buildings. A number of U.S. cities encourage or require benchmarking for large commercial or multi-family buildings. This information helps building owners, purchasers and renters make more informed decisions. This piece of legislation requires the Department of Energy, in collaboration with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, to conduct a study on benchmarking methodologies so that cities and states can avoid pitfalls and implement best practices.

I hope that passage of the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act marks a period of bipartisan cooperation. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee on solving the nation's energy issues and other pressing matters.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2126, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

THE BUDGET MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 113–84)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

After 5 years of grit and determined effort, the United States is better positioned for the 21st Century than any other nation on Earth. We have created more than 8 million new jobs in the last 4 years and now have the lowest unemployment rate in over 5 years. Our housing market is rebounding. Our manufacturing sector is adding jobs for the first time since the 1990s. We now produce more oil at home than we buy from the rest of the world. We have cut our deficits by more than half since I took office. And for the first time in over a decade, business leaders around the world have declared that China is no longer the world's number one place to invest; America is.

We have made great progress, but we must do more to rebuild our economy on a new foundation for growth and prosperity. I believe that what unites the people of this Nation, regardless of race or region or party, young or old, rich or poor, is the simple, profound belief in opportunity for all—the notion that if you work hard and take responsibility, you can get ahead. That belief has suffered some serious blows. Over more than three decades, even before the Great Recession hit, massive shifts in technology and global competition had eliminated good, middle class jobs and weakened the economic foundations that families depend on.

Today, after 4 years of economic growth, corporate profits and stock prices have rarely been higher, and those at the top have never done better. But average wages have barely budged. Inequality has deepened. Upward mobility remains stalled. Even in the midst of recovery, too many Americans are working more than ever just to get by—let alone get ahead. And too many still are not working at all.

Our job is to reverse these trends. We need to return to an America where our success depends not on accident of birth, but on the strength of our work ethic and the scope of our dreams. That is what drew our forebears here. Opportunity is who we are. And the defining project of our generation is to restore that promise. It will not happen right away. But we must continue to strive toward that goal.

What I offer in this Budget is a set of concrete, practical proposals to speed up growth, strengthen the middle class, and build new ladders of opportunity into the middle class—all while continuing to improve the Nation's long-run fiscal position.

Earlier this year, thanks to the work of Democrats and Republicans, the Congress produced an agreement that undid some of last year's severe cuts to priorities like education and research, infrastructure, and national security. Recognizing the importance of that bipartisan compromise, the Budget adheres to the spending levels agreed to by the Congress for fiscal year 2015. But there is clearly much more we can and should do to invest in areas like infrastructure, innovation, and education that will create jobs, economic growth, and opportunity. So I am including in my Budget a fully paid for Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative that provides the Congress a roadmap for how and where additional investments should be made in both domestic priorities and national security this year.

We know where to start: the best measure of opportunity is access to a good job. With the economy picking up speed, companies say they intend to hire more people this year. And over half of big manufacturers say they are thinking of insourcing jobs from abroad.

We need to make that decision easier for more companies. Both Democrats and Republicans have argued that our tax code is riddled with wasteful, complicated loopholes that make it harder to invest here and encourage companies to keep profits abroad. Last summer, I offered a proposal to couple business tax reform with critical investments in infrastructure. This Budget includes that proposal, using the transition revenue that will result from a shift to a simpler, more efficient tax code to create jobs rebuilding our roads and bridges and unclogging our commutes and transporting goods made in America—because in today's global economy, first-class jobs gravitate to first-class infrastructure. At the same time, this Budget lays out how my Administration will continue to act on our own to cut red tape and streamline the permitting process for key infrastructure projects, so we can get more construction workers on the job as fast as possible.

We also have the chance, right now, to beat other countries in the race for the next wave of high-tech manufacturing jobs. My Administration has already launched four hubs for high-tech manufacturing, where we have connected businesses to research universities that can help America lead the world in advanced technologies. The Budget expands on these efforts by providing funding for five additional institutes, and, through the Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative, supports the goal I announced last summer of creating a national network of 45 of these manufacturing innovation institutes over the next 10 years.

We know that the nation that goes all-in on innovation today will own the global economy tomorrow. This is an edge America cannot surrender. That is why the Budget includes investments in cutting-edge research and development, driving scientific and technological breakthroughs that will create jobs, improve lives, and open new opportunities for the American people. The Budget's Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative will allow us to push our limits even further, supporting additional biomedical research at the National Institutes of Health that will help us fight Alzheimer's, cancer, and other diseases, climate research to develop climate change-resilient infrastructure, and agricultural research that will help increase agricultural productivity and improve health.

We also know that one of the biggest factors in bringing more jobs back is our commitment to American energy. The all-of-the-above energy strategy I announced a few years ago is working, and today, America is closer to energy independence than we have been in decades.

The Budget advances this strategy by ensuring the safe and responsible production of natural gas and cleaner electricity generation from fossil fuels. It creates new incentives to cut the amount of energy we waste in our cars, trucks, homes, and factories. It promotes clean energy with investments in technologies like solar and by expanding and making permanent the tax credit for the production of renewable energy. And it continues to strengthen protection of our air, water, land, and communities, and addresses the threat of climate change. Climate change is a fact, and we have to act with more urgency to address it because a changing climate is already harming western communities struggling with drought and coastal cities dealing with floods. That is why I directed my Administration to work with States, utilities, and others to set new standards on the amount of carbon pollution our power plants are allowed to dump into the air, and why this Budget advances new approaches to address the growing cost and damage from wildfires.

All of these efforts can speed up growth and create more jobs. But in this rapidly changing economy, we have to make sure that every American has the skills to fill those jobs. The Budget therefore invests in new efforts to drive greater performance and innovation in workforce training, including on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and other steps to equip workers with skills that match the needs of employers.

Of course, it is not enough to train today's workforce. We also have to prepare tomorrow's workforce by guaranteeing every child access to a world-class education. That is why the Budget builds on the progress we have made with new investments and initiatives to improve all levels of education, from early childhood through college.

Research shows that one of the best investments we can make in a child's life is high-quality early education. This year, we will invest in new partnerships with States and communities across the country to expand access to high-quality early education, and I am again calling on the Congress to make high-quality preschool available to every four-year-old child. The Budget also includes funding to provide access to high-quality infant and toddler care for more than 100,000 children, and supports the extension and expansion of voluntary home visiting programs.

Last year, I called on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to

connect 99 percent of our students to high-speed broadband over the next 4 years. This year, the FCC is making a down payment on this goal by connecting more than 15,000 schools and 20 million students over the next 2 years, without adding a dime to the deficit. To ensure students receive the full benefit of this connectivity, the Budget invests in training for teachers in hundreds of school districts across the country.

The Budget also supports redesigning our high schools, helping them partner with colleges and employers that offer the college-level coursework and real-world skills to prepare students for college and careers. And it launches a new Race to the Top competition aimed at closing the achievement gap, so that all children get the high-quality education they need to succeed.

And we are shaking up our system of higher education to encourage innovation, give parents more information, and reward colleges for improving quality and reducing costs, so that no middle class student is priced out of a college education. Last summer, I directed the Department of Education to develop and publish a new college rating system that will identify colleges that provide the best value to students and encourage all colleges to improve. The Budget supports the development of that rating system and provides bonuses to reward colleges that improve educational outcomes for Pell Grant recipients. And to help more Americans who feel trapped by student loan debt, the Budget expands income-driven repayment options, allowing millions the opportunity to cap their monthly student loan payments at 10 percent of their income.

We also must do more to ensure our economy honors the dignity of work, and that hard work pays off for all of our citizens. Americans overwhelmingly agree that no one who works full time should ever have to raise a family in poverty. I have already acted by Executive Order to require Federal contractors to pay their federally funded employees a fair wage of at least $10.10 an hour. The Congress needs to go further and raise the minimum wage for all workers to that same amount. This raise will help families, and it will help the economy by giving businesses customers with more money to spend and by boosting productivity and reducing turnover. The Budget also invests in enforcement efforts to make sure workers receive the wages and overtime they have earned.

There are other steps we can take to help families make ends meet. Few policies are more effective at reducing inequality and helping families pull themselves up through hard work than the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The EITC for families with children lifts millions out of poverty each year and helps about half of all parents at some point in their lives. But as a number of prominent policymakers, both progressive and conservative, have noted, the EITC does not do enough for single workers who do not have kids. The Budget doubles the value of the EITC for workers without children and non-custodial parents, and also makes it available to younger adult workers, so that it can encourage work in the crucial years at the beginning of a young person's career.

We also need to do more to help Americans save for retirement. Today, most workers do not have a pension. A Social Security check often is not enough on its own. And while the stock market has doubled over the last 5 years, that does not improve retirement security for people who do not have retirement savings. That is why the Budget builds on my proposal to create a new way for working Americans to start saving for retirement: the MyRA savings bond. To encourage new savers, MyRA requires a low initial contribution and guarantees a decent return with no risk of losing what you put in. Separately, the Budget also proposes to establish automatic enrollment Individual Retirement Accounts, offering every American access to an automatic savings vehicle on the job.

For decades, few things exposed hard-working families to economic hardship more than a broken health care system. With the enactment of the Affordable Care Act, we are in the process of fixing that. Already, because of the health reform law, more than 3 million Americans under the age of 26 have gained coverage under their parents' plans. More than 9 million Americans have signed up for private health insurance or Medicaid coverage. Because of this law, no American can ever again be dropped or denied coverage for a preexisting condition like asthma, back pain, or cancer. No woman can ever be charged more just because she is a woman. And we did all this while adding years to Medicare's finances, keeping Medicare premiums flat, and lowering prescription costs for millions of seniors. To continue this progress, the Budget fully funds the ongoing implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

We must always remember that economic growth and opportunity can only be achieved if America is safe and secure. At home, the Budget supports efforts to make our communities safer by reducing gun violence and reforming our criminal justice system.

Looking beyond our borders, the Budget responsibly transitions from the completion of our military mission in Afghanistan in 2014 to political and security support for a unified Afghan government as it takes full responsibility for its own future. When I took office, nearly 180,000 Americans were serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, all our troops are out of Iraq and more than 60,000 of our troops have already come home from Afghanistan. With Afghan forces now in the lead for their own security, our troops have moved to a support role. Together with our allies, we will complete our mission there by the end of this year, and America's longest war will finally be over.

In addition to responsibly winding down our operations in Afghanistan, the Budget ensures we maintain ready, modern, and capable defense forces to address any threats we might face, including threats from terrorism and cyber attacks. It funds humanitarian and diplomatic efforts in Syria, supports transition and reform throughout the Middle East and North Africa, and advances our strategic rebalancing toward the Asia-Pacific region. It enhances stability and creates new markets for U.S. businesses with investments in Power Africa and promotes peace and security by supporting global health care and addressing climate change. And it strengthens oversight of intelligence activities and enhances the protection of U.S. diplomatic facilities and personnel overseas.

The Budget also ensures that we continue to meet our obligations to our troops and veterans who have given so much to our country. To deliver on this commitment, it provides significant resources to support veterans' medical care, help military families, assist soldiers transitioning to civilian life, reduce veterans' homelessness, and reduce the disability claims backlog so our veterans receive the benefits they have earned. It also introduces necessary reforms to our military compensation system, which our uniform military leadership called for, to ensure servicemembers and their families receive the benefits that they have earned while making sure that our military can invest in the training, equipment, and support that it needs.

In addition to making these critical investments, the Budget outlines the steps my Administration is taking to create a 21st Century Government that is more efficient, effective, and supportive of economic growth. Our citizens and businesses expect their Government to provide the same level of service experienced in the private sector and we intend to deliver. The Budget includes initiatives that will lead to better, faster, and smarter services, both online and in-person. It calls on Federal agencies to share services and leverage the buying power of the Government to bring greater value and efficiency for taxpayer dollars. It continues to open Government data and research for public and private sector use to spur innovation and job creation. And it invests in the Government's most important resource, its workers, ensuring that we can attract and retain the best talent in the Federal workforce and foster a culture of excellence.

The Budget does all of these things while further strengthening the Nation's long-term fiscal outlook. Over the last 5 years, we have cut the deficit in half as a share of the economy, experiencing the fastest period of deficit reduction since the demobilization following World War II. The Budget continues this progress, bringing deficits

down as a share of the economy to below 2 percent by 2023 and putting debt as a share of the economy on a declining path.

Although we have seen a notable and significant decline in health care spending growth over the last few years, in part due to the Affordable Care Act, we know that over the long run, the growth of health care costs continues to be our Nation's most pressing fiscal challenge. That is why the Budget builds on the savings and reforms in the health reform law with additional measures to strengthen Medicare and Medicaid and encourage high-quality and efficient health care.

We also know that revenue has to be part of the solution to our Nation's long-term fiscal challenges. Given the aging of our population and the declining ratio of workers to retirees, we will need additional revenue to maintain our commitments to seniors while also making the investments that are needed to grow our economy and expand opportunity. The Budget secures that revenue through tax reform that reduces inefficient and unfair tax breaks and ensures that everyone, from Main Street to Wall Street, is paying their fair share.

Finally, if we are serious about long-term, sustainable economic growth and deficit reduction, it is also time to heed the calls of business leaders, labor leaders, faith leaders, and law enforcement—and fix our broken immigration system. Independent economists say immigration reform will grow our economy and shrink our deficits by almost $1 trillion in the next two decades. And for good reason: when people come here to fulfill their dreams—to study, invent, and contribute to our culture—they make our country a more attractive place for businesses to locate and help create jobs for everyone. The Senate has acted to pass a bipartisan immigration reform bill that is worthy of support. It is time for the House of Representatives to finish the job.

We have made progress over the last 5 years. But our work is not done. This Budget provides a roadmap to ensuring middle class families and those working to be a part of the middle class can feel secure in their jobs, homes, and budgets. To build real, lasting economic security, we also need to expand opportunity for all so every American can get ahead and have a shot at creating a better life for their kids.

None of it is easy. America has never come easy. But if we work together, if we summon what is best in us, I know it is within our reach.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *March 4, 2014*.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 13 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1700

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING) at 5 p.m.

SLEEPING BEAR DUNES NATIONAL LAKESHORE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION ACT

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 23) to designate as wilderness certain land and inland water within the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in the State of Michigan, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 23

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Conservation and Recreation Act''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) MAP.—The term ''map'' means the map consisting of 6 sheets entitled ''Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Proposed Wilderness Boundary'', numbered 634/80,083B, and dated November 2010.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 3. SLEEPING BEAR DUNES WILDERNESS.

(a) DESIGNATION.—In accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), certain land and inland water within the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore comprising approximately 32,557 acres along the mainland shore of Lake Michigan and on certain nearby islands in Benzie and Leelanau Counties, Michigan, as generally depicted on the map, is designated as wilderness and as a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System, to be known as the ''Sleeping Bear Dunes Wilderness''.

(b) MAP.—

(1) AVAILABILITY.—The map shall be on file and available for public inspection in appropriate offices of the National Park Service.

(2) CORRECTIONS.—The Secretary may correct any clerical or typographical errors in the map.

(3) LEGAL DESCRIPTION.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall prepare a legal description of the wilderness boundary and submit a copy of the map and legal description to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives.

(c) ROAD SETBACKS.—The wilderness boundary shall be—

(1) 100 feet from the centerline of adjacent county roads; and

(2) 300 feet from the centerline of adjacent State highways.

SEC. 4. ADMINISTRATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to valid existing rights, the wilderness area designated by section 3(a) shall be administered by the Secretary in accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), except that—

(1) any reference in the Wilderness Act to the effective date of that Act shall be considered to be a reference to the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) any reference in the Wilderness Act to the Secretary of Agriculture shall be considered to be a reference to the Secretary.

(b) MAINTENANCE OF ROADS OUTSIDE WILDERNESS BOUNDARY.—Nothing in this Act prevents the maintenance and improvement of roads that are located outside the boundary of the wilderness area designated by section 3(a).

(c) FISH AND WILDLIFE.—Nothing in this Act affects the jurisdiction of the State of Michigan with respect to the management of fish and wildlife, including hunting and fishing within the national lakeshore in accordance with section 5 of Public Law 91–479 (16 U.S.C. 460x–4).

(d) SAVINGS PROVISIONS.—Nothing in this Act modifies, alters, or affects—

(1) any treaty rights; or

(2) any valid private property rights in existence on the day before the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HORSFORD) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bill reflects decades of work, work by local citizens who organized to reject the dictates of the Federal bureaucracy and to protect public access and recreation. At the same time that this bill designates new wilderness, it also provides critical protections for the public's ability to visit and enjoy the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in the State of Michigan. Let me give you a little bit of background.

In 1981, the National Park Service proposed a general management plan for the lakeshore in Michigan. The plan was so restrictive as to be punitive towards recreation, and it sparked a local backlash. After years of collaboration, a new plan was agreed upon that realigned the wilderness boundaries to restore sensible public access.

This legislation would codify these negotiated changes into law and ensure the continued availability of roads for visitors traveling to remote trailheads, to beaches, to backcountry areas, and to historic areas within this geography. The bill also protects motorboater access to the shoreline. It specifically protects private property rights. It preserves hunting and fishing rights, and it does not expand Federal land ownership or add any additional costs to taxpayers.

As I stated, this effort has been going on for several decades. After the House votes today, this bill will go to the President for his signature in order to become law. Yet, Mr. Speaker, the real

credit for this legislation, even though it is a Senate bill, is owed to our colleague from Michigan, Dr. BENISHEK, for making this happen. He is the lead sponsor of this legislation, or the companion legislation, in the House of Representatives. Dr. BENISHEK has been a persistent and persuasive advocate for this local proposal.

As the chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, which oversees this bill, I can state with certainty that it is because of his, Dr. BENISHEK's, bipartisan efforts that this bill will pass the House tonight. He has worked closely with both Republicans and Democrats, especially his senior Senator, Senator LEVIN of Michigan, to make this a reality. Without their personal efforts, today's vote would not happen.

Dr. BENISHEK certainly deserves recognition for this success, and I congratulate him and the people of Michigan, whom he represents, for this legislation.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. HORSFORD asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank our chairman from the Natural Resources Committee, and I am proud to be here on behalf of the minority to speak in favor of S. 23, which is a locally driven conservation initiative that will make the management of a national park unit more efficient and will create the first new acres of wilderness enacted into the system since 2009. Adding approximately 30,000 acres of wilderness will protect the special character of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in Michigan.

The passage of this bill is going to make a lot of people very happy, and I hope it is a sign of change to come. Congress should not stand in the way of locally driven conservation initiatives, and we look forward to working with the majority to identify more opportunities in which to work together and to move legislation that merits our attention. There are a lot more wilderness bills, monument designations, and wildlife and scenic river bills that the House should consider. We happily support the adoption of S. 23.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK), the author of the House legislation which is the companion to what we are voting on from the Senate.

Mr. BENISHEK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, today, I rise in support of S. 23, the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Conservation and Recreation Act.

As you know, this bill, which passed the Senate by unanimous consent on June 19, 2013, is identical to H.R. 163, legislation I introduced by the same title last January with the full support of the Michigan delegation.

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore is a treasured area of my home district and for the entire Nation. The park has been named America's most beautiful place by ''Good Morning America,'' and over 1 million visitors from around the world come to see the dunes and the surrounding lakes each year.

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore plays a vital role in our State's outdoor recreation economy, which contributes over $18 billion in consumer spending and over 194,000 jobs to the State of Michigan. As Pamela of Lake Township said, ''Sleeping Bear is vital to the economy of northern Michigan. Most of the money earned in this area is during the summer months when tourists from all over the country visit.'' From gas stations to ice cream stands to local hotels, our local businesses look forward to a full and thriving park season each year.

In 1981, Congress determined that wilderness areas should exist within this park, and over 30,000 acres of park have been managed as wilderness since that time. When the National Park Service began to update the proposed map for the first time since 1981, the local residents discovered for the first time that the map included a number of county roads, beaches, and historic sites in this proposed wilderness area.

As you can imagine, local residents in Benzie, Leelanau, and Grand Traverse County were not pleased, and a lengthy public planning period began. Because of the very public local opposition to the original land management plan, the Park Service agreed to go back to the drawing board. They worked together with the local citizens and interest groups, ranging from area businesses to environmental groups. After gathering extensive public involvement, review, and comment, a final general management plan was adopted in January 2009. This plan ensures that all county roads will remain in control of the local governments, and beaches and historic sites will be excluded from the wilderness map.

The bill on the floor here today represents the hard work of these engaged citizens. It has been introduced each Congress, in both the House and the Senate, since 2009. This legislation, like the park, itself, has always enjoyed wide support from the entire Michigan delegation on both sides of the aisle. While we may not agree on every issue, we can agree that our local communities know best when it comes to planning for the future of our parks.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have worked with those who have come before me—from Chairman CAMP, to former Representative Hoekstra, to Representative HUIZENGA and Senator LEVIN—to shepherd this bill through Congress. My goal is simple. Like all of those who love this amazing stretch of shoreline, I want to ensure that those beaches and roads remain open.

I hope everyone will join me in visiting Sleeping Bear Dunes soon. You will get to see how truly blessed northern Michigan is to have this amazing natural wonder.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP), another cosponsor of this legislation and the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. CAMP. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the bill offered by my colleague and friend, Mr. DAN BENISHEK of Michigan.

The Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore is not just a Michigan but a national treasure. It is enjoyed by over 1 million visitors from across the State, country, and world each year. In fact, in 2011, Sleeping Bear was voted the ''most beautiful place in America'' by a poll conducted by ''Good Morning America.''

This bill is the product of years of work between members of the public, the National Park Service, and local, State, and Federal officials. It strikes a careful balance between conservation and recreation. In addition to protecting this vital natural resource, the bill ensures that the beaches of Lake Michigan will be accessible to the public and that hunting and fishing rights, as well as boating access, will be maintained.

I hope the rest of the House will join me today in supporting the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Conservation and Recreation Act so that this national treasure can be enjoyed to its fullest now and for many generations to come.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, just to reiterate, we fully support S. 23. I look forward to its passage, and I look forward to one day visiting this beautiful location in Michigan.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 23.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NORTH FORK WATERSHED PROTECTION ACT OF 2014

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2259) to withdraw certain Federal land and interests

in that land from location, entry, and patent under the mining laws and disposition under the mineral and geothermal leasing laws and to preserve existing uses, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2259

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''North Fork Watershed Protection Act of 2014''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ELIGIBLE FEDERAL LAND.—The term ''eligible Federal land'' means—

(A) any federally owned land or interest in land depicted on the Map as within the North Fork Federal Lands Withdrawal Area; or

(B) any land or interest in land located within the North Fork Federal Lands Withdrawal Area that is acquired by the Federal Government after the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) MAP.—The term ''Map'' means the Bureau of Land Management map entitled ''North Fork Federal Lands Withdrawal Area'' and dated June 9, 2010.

SEC. 3. WITHDRAWAL.

(a) WITHDRAWAL.—Subject to valid existing rights, the eligible Federal land is withdrawn from—

(1) all forms of location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and

(2) disposition under all laws relating to mineral leasing and geothermal leasing.

(b) AVAILABILITY OF MAP.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Map shall be made available to the public at each appropriate office of the Bureau of Land Management.

(c) EFFECT OF SECTION.—Nothing in this section violates the rights of existing leaseholders or prohibits the Secretary of the Interior from taking any action necessary to complete any requirement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) or the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) required for permitting surface-disturbing activity to occur on any lease issued before the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 4. EXISTING USES NOT AFFECTED.

Except with respect to the withdrawal under section 3, nothing in this Act restricts recreational uses, livestock management activities, or forest management activities allowed on the date of the enactment of this Act on the eligible Federal land in accordance with applicable law.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HORSFORD) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the legislation under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The legislation before the House today enjoys bipartisan and bicameral support in Congress and the strong endorsement of the affected local communities.

Our colleague, Mr. DAINES of Montana, is the lead sponsor of this bill, and he has championed its action here in the House. I can assure everyone that it is because of his leadership, his commitment and energy that this legislation will pass the House today. Mr. DAINES has put the interests of Montana first and has been willing to work in a bipartisan way, with Republicans and Democrats, to get this bill passed.

Mr. Speaker, the North Fork Watershed Protection Act would codify protections of Federal forest lands in the North Fork watershed from development in accordance with the memorandum of understanding signed in 2010 between the Province of British Columbia and the State of Montana. Very significantly, the bill makes certain in law that existing uses, including public recreation, livestock management, and forest management are protected and not restricted. This bill will ensure that this region stays accessible for most of the traditional activities in this beautiful part of Montana.

Mr. Speaker, in 1988, the Ninth Circuit Court enjoined the Department of the Interior from allowing any activity on issued oil and gas leases in this area. Since then, no oil and gas development has taken place in this area, and several leaseholders have voluntarily relinquished their oil and gas leases within this area. The State of Montana has made clear its desire to partner with British Columbia, as I have mentioned, to protect this watershed. H.R. 2259 would similarly protect the Federal land located within this region.

Again, I would like to recognize the author of this legislation, Mr. DAINES, for his hard work and leadership, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 2259 will protect an important watershed and recreational resource west of Glacier National Park, and we are glad to see it on the suspension calendar. It is a widely supported initiative in Montana that will conserve a treasured landscape that belongs to every American. Some places are just too special to allow short-term commercial considerations to potentially harm their long-term viability.

Stakeholders in Montana identified the importance of the North Fork watershed, an area that supports the recreation-based economy, provides clean drinking water, and allows wildlife to thrive. H.R. 2259 guarantees that this area will not be threatened by unfettered energy development. I support this bill, and I urge its adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1715

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the author of this legislation.

(Mr. DAINES asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Speaker, I want to give my thanks to the chairman of the Natural Resources Committee for his support and leadership in moving this bill through the House.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to proudly offer H.R. 2259, the North Fork Watershed Protection Act, for consideration in the full House.

This bill is special to Montana for many reasons.

The Flathead River is one of the most cherished waterways in our great State, and our country, for trout fishing. In fact, it is considered a ''red ribbon'' stream. That is Montana's version of a blue ribbon trout stream.

The Flathead is an area beloved by the local community for recreation and supporting the region's forest-based economy.

Last but not least, this watershed is a gateway to one of the crown jewels of the National Park system, Glacier National Park.

Protecting the watershed and ensuring its value extends for future generations has been a task shared by Governors and legislatures of both parties, our neighboring Canadian Province of British Columbia, as well as our local Chambers of Commerce. It is also supported by Montana Senators Max Baucus and JOHN TESTER, and myself. We all support protecting this area for future generations. It makes this bill the first lands legislation supported by the entire Montana delegation in nearly 30 years.

The North Fork Watershed Protection Act protects 430,000 acres along the North and Middle Forks of the Flathead River from mineral development. Eighty percent of leases in this area have already been voluntarily relinquished. The bill explicitly protects the rights of existing leaseholders, and there is no loss in production.

The North Fork Watershed Protection Act represents commonsense resource management. It is the kind of common sense Montanans understand and Washington, D.C., needs more of.

The North Fork Watershed Protection Act ensures the region's current uses—forest management, hunting, fishing, outdoor recreation, quality water supply for local communities, access to gravel for infrastructure maintenance, and livestock grazing—will continue for many generations to come because that is our way of life in Montana.

The North Fork Watershed Protection Act is a key to international agreement between the State of Montana and British Columbia. In fact, in February of 2010, the Province of British Columbia and the State of Montana

signed a Memorandum of Understanding to preclude mineral development along the Flathead. British Columbia completed prohibition of mineral development along the Flathead River in 2011.

The North Fork Watershed Protection Act is necessary to hold up the U.S. end of the bargain and to be a good neighbor. The Canadian province has expended significant resources for the sake of upholding this agreement and strongly supports passage of this legislation so their efforts will be solidified.

The bill also has an unprecedented mix of supporters, from ConocoPhillips, Anadarko, and Chevron, to Ducks Unlimited, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, and local chambers of commerce. This unity across diverse stakeholders is reflective of the bill's strong support among Montanans. It is time we get this done.

Montanans have been working toward protecting the Flathead for decades. Senator Max Baucus began work to protect this watershed in his very first year in Congress. That was back in 1974, when he was Montana's Congressman in the House. I am proud to be part of the effort to get it done and across the finish line.

Passage of the North Fork Watershed Protection Act is a major stop towards a commonsense goal that Montanans have worked toward together for decades.

Though Senator Bachus has now retired and is serving in China, the passage of the North Fork Watershed Protection Act will send a strong message to the Senate to get it done.

I urge passage of H.R. 2259, the North Fork Watershed Protection Act.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise again to reiterate our support for H.R. 2259, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2259, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3370) to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3370

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE AND TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title and table of contents.
Sec. 2. Definitions.
Sec. 3. Repeal of certain rate increases.
Sec. 4. Restoration of grandfathered rates.
Sec. 5. Requirements regarding annual rate increases.
Sec. 6. Clarification of rates for properties newly mapped into areas with special flood hazards.
Sec. 7. Premiums and reports.
Sec. 8. Annual premium surcharge.
Sec. 9. Draft affordability framework.
Sec. 10. Risk transfer.
Sec. 11. Monthly installment payment for premiums.
Sec. 12. Optional high-deductible policies for residential properties.
Sec. 13. Exclusion of detached structures from mandatory purchase requirement.
Sec. 14. Accounting for flood mitigation activities in estimates of premium rates.
Sec. 15. Home improvement fairness.
Sec. 16. Affordability study and report.
Sec. 17. Flood insurance rate map certification.
Sec. 18. Funds to reimburse homeowners for successful map appeals.
Sec. 19. Flood protection systems.
Sec. 20. Quarterly reports regarding Reserve Fund ratio.
Sec. 21. Treatment of floodproofed residential basements.
Sec. 22. Exemption from fees for certain map change requests.
Sec. 23. Study of voluntary community-based flood insurance options.
Sec. 24. Designation of flood insurance advocate.
Sec. 25. Exceptions to escrow requirement for flood insurance payments.
Sec. 26. Flood mitigation methods for buildings.
Sec. 27. Mapping of non-structural flood mitigation features.
Sec. 28. Clear communications.
Sec. 29. Protection of small businesses, nonprofits, houses of worship, and residences.
Sec. 30. Mapping.
Sec. 31. Disclosure.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

For purposes of this title, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(2) NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM.—The term ''National Flood Insurance Program'' means the program established under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.).

SEC. 3. REPEAL OF CERTAIN RATE INCREASES.

(a) REPEAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1307(g) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(g)) is amended—

(A) by striking paragraphs (1) and (2);

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking ''as a result of the deliberate choice of the holder of such policy'' and inserting '', unless the decision of the policy holder to permit a lapse in flood insurance coverage was as a result of the property covered by the policy no longer being required to retain such coverage'' ; and

(C) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (1) and (2), respectively.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The Administrator shall promulgate such regulations, and make available such rate tables, as necessary to implement the amendments made by paragraph (1) as if it were enacted as part of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 957).

(3) IIMPLEMENTATION, COORDINATION, AND GUIDANCE.—

(A) FACILITATION OF TIMELY REFUNDS.—To ensure the participation of Write Your Own companies (as such term is defined in section 100202(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (42 U.S.C. 4004(a)), the Administrator and the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall consult with Write Your Own companies throughout the development of guidance and rate tables necessary to implement the provisions of and the amendments made by this Act.

(B) IMPLEMENTATION AND GUIDANCE.—The Administrator shall issue final guidance and rate tables necessary to implement the provisions of and the amendments made by this Act not later than eight months following the date of the enactment of this Act. Write Your Own companies, in coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, shall have not less than six months but not more than eight months following the issuance of such final guidance and rate tables to implement the changes required by such final guidance and rate tables.

(4) REFUND OF EXCESS PREMIUM CHARGES COLLECTED.—The Administrator shall refund directly to insureds any premiums for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program collected in excess of the rates required under the provisions of and amendments made by this section. To allow for necessary and appropriate implementation of such provisions and amendments, any premium changes necessary to implement such provisions and amendments, including any such premium refund due to policy holders, which shall be paid directly by the National Flood Insurance Program, shall not be charged or paid to policyholders by the National Flood Insurance Program until after the Administrator issues guidance and makes available such rate tables to implement the provisions of and amendments made by this Act.

(b) ASSUMPTION OF POLICIES AT EXISTING PREMIUM RATES.—The Administrator shall provide that the purchaser of a property that, as of the date of such purchase, is covered under an existing flood insurance policy under this title may assume such existing policy and coverage for the remainder of the term of the policy at the chargeable premium rates under such existing policy. Such rates shall continue with respect to such property until the implementation of subsection (a).

SEC. 4. RESTORATION OF GRANDFATHERED RATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (h); and

(2) by redesignating subsection (i) as subsection (h).

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect as if enacted as part of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 957).

SEC. 5. REQUIREMENTS REGARDING ANNUAL RATE INCREASES.

Section 1308(e) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(e)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking '', the chargeable risk premium rates for flood insurance under this title for any properties'';

(2) in paragraph (1), by inserting ''the chargeable risk premium rates for flood insurance under this title for any properties'' before ''within any'';

(3) in paragraph (2), by inserting ''the chargeable risk premium rates for flood insurance under this title for any properties'' before ''described in'';

(4) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2), as so amended, as paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively; and

(5) by inserting before paragraph (3), as so redesignated, the following new paragraphs:

''(1) the chargeable risk premium rate for flood insurance under this title for any property may not be increased by more than 18 percent each year, except—

''(A) as provided in paragraph (4);

''(B) in the case of property identified under section 1307(g); or

''(C) in the case of a property that—

''(i) is located in a community that has experienced a rating downgrade under the community rating system program carried out under section 1315(b);

''(ii) is covered by a policy with respect to which the policyholder has—

''(I) decreased the amount of the deductible; or

''(II) increased the amount of coverage; or

''(iii) was misrated;

''(2) the chargeable risk premium rates for flood insurance under this title for any properties initially rated under section 1307(a)(2) within any single risk classification, excluding properties for which the chargeable risk premium rate is not less than the applicable estimated risk premium rate under section 1307(a)(1), shall be increased by an amount that results in an average of such rate increases for properties within the risk classification during any 12-month period of not less than 5 percent of the average of the risk premium rates for such properties within the risk classification upon the commencement of such 12-month period;'';

(6) in paragraph (3) (as so redesignated by paragraph (4) of this section), by striking ''20 percent'' and inserting ''15 percent''; and

(7) in paragraph (4) (as so redesignated) by paragraph (4) of this section), by striking ''paragraph (1)'' and inserting ''paragraph (3)''.

SEC. 6. CLARIFICATION OF RATES FOR PROPERTIES NEWLY MAPPED INTO AREAS WITH SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARDS.

Section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015), as amended by the preceding provisions of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(i) RATES FOR PROPERTIES NEWLY MAPPED INTO AREAS WITH SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARDS.—Notwithstanding subsection (f), the premium rate for flood insurance under this title that is purchased on or after the date of the enactment of this subsection—

''(1) on a property located in an area not previously designated as having special flood hazards and that, pursuant to any issuance, revision, updating, or other change in a flood insurance map, becomes designated as such an area, and

''(2) where such flood insurance premium rate is calculated under subsection (a)(1) of section 1307 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(1)),

shall for the first policy year be the preferred risk premium for the property and upon renewal shall be calculated in accordance with subsection (e) of this section until the rate reaches the rate calculated under subsection (a)(1) of section 1307.''.

SEC. 7. PREMIUMS AND REPORTS.

Section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015), as amended by the preceding provisions of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(j) PREMIUMS AND REPORTS.—In setting premium risk rates, in addition to striving to achieve the objectives of this title the Administrator shall also strive to minimize the number of policies with annual premiums that exceed one percent of the total coverage provided by the policy. For any policies premiums that exceed this one percent threshold, the Administrator shall report such exceptions to the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.''.

SEC. 8. ANNUAL PREMIUM SURCHARGE.

(a) PREMIUM SURCHARGE.—Chapter I of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4011 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 1308 the following new section:

''SEC. 1308A. PREMIUM SURCHARGE.

''(a) IMPOSITION AND COLLECTION.—The Administrator shall impose and collect an annual surcharge, in the amount provided in subsection (b), on all policies for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program that are newly issued or renewed after the date of the enactment of this section. Such surcharge shall be in addition to the surcharge under section 1304(b) and any other assessments and surcharges applied to such coverage.

''(b) AMOUNT.—The amount of the surcharge under subsection (a) shall be—

''(1) $25, except as provided in paragraph (2); and

''(2) $250, in the case of a policy for any property that is—

''(A) a non-residential property; or

''(B) a residential property that is not the primary residence of an individual.

''(c) TERMINATION.—Subsections (a) and (b) shall cease to apply on the date on which the chargeable risk premium rate for flood insurance under this title for each property covered by flood insurance under this title, other than properties for which premiums are calculated under subsection (e) or (f) of section 1307 or section 1336 of this Act (42 U.S.C. 4014, 4056) or under section 100230 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (42 U.S.C. 4014 note), is not less than the applicable estimated risk premium rate under section 1307(a)(1) for such property.''.

(b) DEPOSIT IN RESERVE FUND.—Subsection (c) of section 1310A of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4017a) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(4) DEPOSIT OF PREMIUM SURCHARGES.—The Administrator shall deposit in the Reserve Fund any surcharges collected pursuant to section 1308A.''.

SEC. 9. DRAFT AFFORDABILITY FRAMEWORK.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall prepare a draft affordability framework that proposes to address, via programmatic and regulatory changes, the issues of affordability of flood insurance sold under the National Flood Insurance Program, including issues identified in the affordability study required under section 100236 of the Bigger-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–141; 126 Stat. 957).

(b) CRITERIA.—In carrying out the requirements under subsection (a), the Administrator shall consider the following criteria:

(1) Accurate communication to consumers of the flood risk associated with their properties.

(2) Targeted assistance to flood insurance policy holders based on their financial ability to continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.

(3) Individual or community actions to mitigate the risk of flood or lower the cost of flood insurance.

(4) The impact of increases in risk premium rates on participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.

(5) The impact flood insurance rate map updates have on the affordability of flood insurance.

(c) DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION.—Not later than 18 months after the date on which the Administrator submits the affordability study referred to in subsection (a), the Administrator shall submit to the full Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the full Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the full Committee on Financial Services and the full Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives the draft affordability framework required under subsection (a).

(d) INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS.—The Administrator may enter into an agreement with another Federal agency to—

(1) complete the affordability study referred to in subsection (a); or

(2) prepare the draft affordability framework required under subsection (a).

(e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to provide the Administrator with the authority to provide assistance to homeowners based on affordability that was not available prior to the enactment of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 916).

SEC. 10. RISK TRANSFER.

Section 1345 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4081) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(e) RISK TRANSFER.—The Administrator may secure reinsurance of coverage provided by the flood insurance program from the private reinsurance and capital markets at rates and on terms determined by the Administrator to be reasonable and appropriate, in an amount sufficient to maintain the ability of the program to pay claims.''.

SEC. 11. MONTHLY INSTALLMENT PAYMENT FOR PREMIUMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (g) of section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(g)) is amended by striking ''either annually or in more frequent installments'' and inserting ''annually or monthly''.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Administrator shall implement the requirement under section 1308(g) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as amended by subsection (a), not later than the expiration of the 18-month period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 12. OPTIONAL HIGH-DEDUCTIBLE POLICIES FOR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES.

Section 1306 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4013)), as amended by the preceding provisions of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(e) OPTIONAL HIGH-DEDUCTIBLE POLICIES FOR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES.—

''(1) AVAILABILITY.—In the case of residential properties, the Administrator shall make flood insurance coverage available, at the option of the insured, that provides for a loss-deductible for damage to the covered property in various amounts, up to and including $10,000.

''(2) DISCLOSURE.—

''(A) FORM.—The Administrator shall provide the information described in subparagraph (B) clearly and conspicuously on the application form for flood insurance coverage or on a separate form, segregated from

all unrelated information and other required disclosures.

''(B) INFORMATION.—The information described in this subparagraph is—

''(i) information sufficient to inform the applicant of the availability of the coverage option required by paragraph (1) to applicants for flood insurance coverage; and

''(ii) a statement explaining the effect of a loss-deductible and that, in the event of an insured loss, the insured is responsible out-of-pocket for losses to the extent of the deductible selected.''.

SEC. 13. EXCLUSION OF DETACHED STRUCTURES FROM MANDATORY PURCHASE REQUIREMENT.

(a) EXCLUSION.—Subsection (c) of section 102 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) DETACHED STRUCTURES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, flood insurance shall not be required, in the case of any residential property, for any structure that is a part of such property but is detached from the primary residential structure of such property and does not serve as a residence.''.

(b) RESPA STATEMENT.—Section 5(b) of the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974 (12 U.S.C. 2604(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (14), by inserting before the period at the end the following: '', and the following statement: 'Although you may not be required to maintain flood insurance on all structures, you may still wish to do so, and your mortgage lender may still require you to do so to protect the collateral securing the mortgage. If you choose to not maintain flood insurance on a structure, and it floods, you are responsible for all flood losses relating to that structure.' ''; and

(2) by transferring and inserting paragraph (14), as so amended, after paragraph (13).

SEC. 14. ACCOUNTING FOR FLOOD MITIGATION ACTIVITIES IN ESTIMATES OF PREMIUM RATES.

Subparagraph (A) of section 1307(a)(1) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(1)(A)) is amended to read as follows:

''(A) based on consideration of—

''(i) the risk involved and accepted actuarial principles; and

''(ii) the flood mitigation activities that an owner or lessee has undertaken on a property, including differences in the risk involved due to land use measures, floodproofing, flood forecasting, and similar measures,''.

SEC. 15. HOME IMPROVEMENT FAIRNESS.

Section 1307(a)(2)(E)(ii) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(2)(E)(ii)) is amended by striking ''30 percent'' and inserting ''50 percent''.

SEC. 16. AFFORDABILITY STUDY AND REPORT.

(a) STUDY ISSUES.—Subsection (a) of section 100236 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–141; 126 Stat. 957) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

''(5) options for maintaining affordability if annual premiums for flood insurance coverage were to increase to an amount greater than 2 percent of the liability coverage amount under the policy, including options for enhanced mitigation assistance and means-tested assistance;

''(6) the effects that the establishment of catastrophe savings accounts would have regarding long-term affordability of flood insurance coverage; and

''(7) options for modifying the surcharge under 1308A, including based on homeowner income, property value or risk of loss.''.

(b) TIMING OF SUBMISSION.—Notwithstanding the deadline under section 100236(c) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 957), not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the full Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the full Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the full Committee on Financial Services and the full Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives the affordability study and report required under such section 100236.

(c) AFFORDABILITY STUDY FUNDING.—Section 100236(d) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–141; 126 Stat. 957) is amended by striking ''$750,000'' and inserting ''$2,500,000''.

SEC. 17. FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP CERTIFICATION.

The Administrator shall implement a flood mapping program for the National Flood Insurance Program, only after review by the Technical Mapping Advisory Council, that, when applied, results in technically credible flood hazard data in all areas where Flood Insurance Rate Maps are prepared or updated, shall certify in writing to the Congress when such a program has been implemented, and shall provide to the Congress the Technical Mapping Advisory Council review report.

SEC. 18. FUNDS TO REIMBURSE HOMEOWNERS FOR SUCCESSFUL MAP APPEALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1363(f) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4104(f)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by inserting after ''as the case may be,'' the following: ''or, in the case of an appeal that is resolved by submission of conflicting data to the Scientific Resolution Panel provided for in section 1363A, the community,''; and

(2) by striking the second sentence and inserting the following: ''The Administrator may use such amounts from the National Flood Insurance Fund established under section 1310 as may be necessary to carry out this subsection.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 1310(a) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4017(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (6), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (7), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(8) for carrying out section 1363(f).''.

SEC. 19. FLOOD PROTECTION SYSTEMS.

(a) ADEQUATE PROGRESS ON CONSTRUCTION OF FLOOD PROTECTION SYSTEMS.—Section 1307(e) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(e)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by inserting ''or reconstruction'' after ''construction'';

(2) by amending the second sentence to read as follows: ''The Administrator shall find that adequate progress on the construction or reconstruction of a flood protection system, based on the present value of the completed flood protection system, has been made only if (1) 100 percent of the cost of the system has been authorized, (2) at least 60 percent of the cost of the system has been appropriated, (3) at least 50 percent of the cost of the system has been expended, and (4) the system is at least 50 percent completed.''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following: ''Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in determining whether a community has made adequate progress on the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of a flood protection system, the Administrator shall consider all sources of funding, including Federal, State, and local funds.''.

(b) COMMUNITIES RESTORING DISACCREDITED FLOOD PROTECTION SYSTEMS.—Section 1307(f) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(f)) is amended by amending the first sentence to read as follows: ''Notwithstanding any other provision of law, this subsection shall apply to riverine and coastal levees that are located in a community which has been determined by the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to be in the process of restoring flood protection afforded by a flood protection system that had been previously accredited on a Flood Insurance Rate Map as providing 100-year frequency flood protection but no longer does so, and shall apply without regard to the level of Federal funding of or participation in the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of the flood protection system.''.

SEC. 20. QUARTERLY REPORTS REGARDING RESERVE FUND RATIO.

Subsection (e) of section 1310A of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4017a) is amended, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting '', on a calendar quarterly basis,'' after ''submit''.

SEC. 21. TREATMENT OF FLOODPROOFED RESIDENTIAL BASEMENTS.

The Administrator shall continue to extend exceptions and variances for floodproofed basements consistent with section 60.6 of title 44, Code of Federal Regulations, which are effective April 3, 2009; and section 60.3 of such title, which are effective April 3, 2009.

SEC. 22. EXEMPTION FROM FEES FOR CERTAIN MAP CHANGE REQUESTS.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a requester shall be exempt from submitting a review or processing fee for a request for a flood insurance rate map change based on a habitat restoration project that is funded in whole or in part with Federal or State funds, including dam removal, culvert redesign or installation, or the installation of fish passage.

SEC. 23. STUDY OF VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY-BASED FLOOD INSURANCE OPTIONS.

(a) STUDY.—

(1) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Administrator shall conduct a study to assess options, methods, and strategies for making available voluntary community-based flood insurance policies through the National Flood Insurance Program.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—The study conducted under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) take into consideration and analyze how voluntary community-based flood insurance policies—

(i) would affect communities having varying economic bases, geographic locations, flood hazard characteristics or classifications, and flood management approaches; and

(ii) could satisfy the applicable requirements under section 102 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a); and

(B) evaluate the advisability of making available voluntary community-based flood insurance policies to communities, subdivisions of communities, and areas of residual risk.

(3) CONSULTATION.—In conducting the study required under paragraph (1), the Administrator may consult with the Comptroller General of the United States, as the Administrator determines is appropriate.

(b) REPORT BY THE ADMINISTRATOR.—

(1) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives a report that contains the results and conclusions of the study conducted under subsection (a).

(2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include recommendations for—

(A) the best manner to incorporate voluntary community-based flood insurance policies into the National Flood Insurance Program; and

(B) a strategy to implement voluntary community-based flood insurance policies that would encourage communities to undertake flood mitigation activities, including the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of levees, dams, or other flood control structures.

(c) REPORT BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months after the date on which the Administrator submits the report required under subsection (b), the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) review the report submitted by the Administrator; and

(2) submit to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives a report that contains—

(A) an analysis of the report submitted by the Administrator;

(B) any comments or recommendations of the Comptroller General relating to the report submitted by the Administrator; and

(C) any other recommendations of the Comptroller General relating to community-based flood insurance policies.

SEC. 24. DESIGNATION OF FLOOD INSURANCE ADVOCATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall designate a Flood Insurance Advocate to advocate for the fair treatment of policy holders under the National Flood Insurance Program and property owners in the mapping of flood hazards, the identification of risks from flood, and the implementation of measures to minimize the risk of flood.

(b) DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.—The duties and responsibilities of the Flood Insurance Advocate designated under subsection (a) shall be to—

(1) educate property owners and policyholders under the National Flood Insurance Program on—

(A) individual flood risks;

(B) flood mitigation;

(C) measures to reduce flood insurance rates through effective mitigation;

(D) the flood insurance rate map review and amendment process; and

(E) any changes in the flood insurance program as a result of any newly enacted laws (including this Act);

(2) assist policy holders under the National Flood Insurance Program and property owners to understand the procedural requirements related to appealing preliminary flood insurance rate maps and implementing measures to mitigate evolving flood risks;

(3) assist in the development of regional capacity to respond to individual constituent concerns about flood insurance rate map amendments and revisions;

(4) coordinate outreach and education with local officials and community leaders in areas impacted by proposed flood insurance rate map amendments and revisions; and

(5) aid potential policy holders under the National Flood Insurance Program in obtaining and verifying accurate and reliable flood insurance rate information when purchasing or renewing a flood insurance policy.

SEC. 25. EXCEPTIONS TO ESCROW REQUIREMENT FOR FLOOD INSURANCE PAYMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), in the second sentence, by striking ''subparagraph (C)'' and inserting ''subparagraph (B)''; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in clause (ii), by redesignating subclauses (I) and (II) as items (aa) and (bb), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(B) by redesignating clauses (i) and (ii) as subclauses (I) and (II), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(C) in the matter preceding subclause (I), as redesignated by subparagraph (B), by striking ''(A) or (B), if—'' and inserting the following: ''(A)—

''(i) if—'';

(D) by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; or''; and

(E) by adding at the end the following

''(ii) in the case of a loan that—

''(I) is in a junior or subordinate position to a senior lien secured by the same residential improved real estate or mobile home for which flood insurance is being provided at the time of the origination of the loan;

''(II) is secured by residential improved real estate or a mobile home that is part of a condominium, cooperative, or other project development, if the residential improved real estate or mobile home is covered by a flood insurance policy that—

''(aa) meets the requirements that the regulated lending institution is required to enforce under subsection (b)(1);

''(bb) is provided by the condominium association, cooperative, homeowners association, or other applicable group; and

''(cc) the premium for which is paid by the condominium association, cooperative, homeowners association, or other applicable group as a common expense;

''(III) is secured by residential improved real estate or a mobile home that is used as collateral for a business purpose;

''(IV) is a home equity line of credit;

''(V) is a nonperforming loan; or

''(VI) has a term of not longer than 12 months.''.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—

(A) REQUIRED APPLICATION.—The amendments to section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) made by section 100209(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–141; 126 Stat. 920) and by subsection (a) of this section shall apply to any loan that is originated, refinanced, increased, extended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2016.

(B) OPTIONAL APPLICATION.—

(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this subparagraph—

(I) the terms ''Federal entity for lending regulation'', ''improved real estate'', ''regulated lending institution'', and ''servicer'' have the meanings given the terms in section 3 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4003);

(II) the term ''outstanding loan'' means a loan that—

(aa) is outstanding as of January 1, 2016;

(bb) is not subject to the requirement to escrow premiums and fees for flood insurance under section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) as in effect on July 5, 2012; and

(cc) would, if the loan had been originated, refinanced, increased, extended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2016, be subject to the requirements under section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended; and

(III) the term ''section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended'' means section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)(A)), as amended by—

(aa) section 100209(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–141; 126 Stat. 920); and

(bb) subsection (a) of this section.

(ii) OPTION TO ESCROW FLOOD INSURANCE PAYMENTS.—Each Federal entity for lending regulation (after consultation and coordination with the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council) shall, by regulation, direct that each regulated lending institution or servicer of an outstanding loan shall offer and make available to a borrower the option to have the borrower's payment of premiums and fees for flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.), including the escrow of such payments, be treated in the same manner provided under section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended.

(2) REPEAL OF 2-YEAR DELAY ON APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (b) of section 100209 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–141; 126 Stat. 920) is repealed.

(3) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section or the amendments made by this section shall be construed to supersede, during the period beginning on July 6, 2012 and ending on December 31, 2015, the requirements under section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)), as in effect on July 5, 2012.

SEC. 26. FLOOD MITIGATION METHODS FOR BUILDINGS.

(a) GUIDELINES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1361 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4102) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(d) FLOOD MITIGATION METHODS FOR BUILDINGS.—The Administrator shall establish guidelines for property owners that—

''(1) provide alternative methods of mitigation, other than building elevation, to reduce flood risk to residential buildings that cannot be elevated due to their structural characteristics, including—

''(A) types of building materials; and

''(B) types of floodproofing; and

''(2) inform property owners about how the implementation of mitigation methods described in paragraph (1) may affect risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program.''.

(2) ISSUANCE.—The Administrator shall issue the guidelines required under section 1361(d) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4102(d)), as added by the amendment made by paragraph (1) of this subsection, not later than the expiration of the 1-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) CALCULATION OF RISK PREMIUM RATES.—Section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015), as amended by the preceding provisions of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(k) CONSIDERATION OF MITIGATION METHODS.—In calculating the risk premium rate charged for flood insurance for a property under this section, the Administrator shall take into account the implementation of any mitigation method identified by the Administrator in the guidance issued under section 1361(d) (42 U.S.C. 4102(d)).''.

SEC. 27. MAPPING OF NON-STRUCTURAL FLOOD MITIGATION FEATURES.

Section 100216 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (42 U.S.C. 4101b) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(1)(A)—

(A) in clause (iv), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) by redesignating clause (v) as clause (vi);

(C) by inserting after clause (iv) the following new clause:

''(v) areas that are protected by non-structural flood mitigation features; and''; and

(D) in clause (vi) (as so redesignated), by inserting before the semicolon at the end the following: ''and by non-structural flood mitigation features''; and

(2) in subsection (d)(1)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) through (C) as subparagraphs (B) through (D), respectively;

(B) in subparagraph (C) (as so redesignated), by striking ''subparagraph (A)'' and inserting ''subparagraph (B)''; and

(C) by inserting before subparagraph (B) (as so redesignated) the following new subparagraph:

''(A) work with States, local communities, and property owners to identify areas and features described in subsection (b)(1)(A)(v);''.

SEC. 28. CLEAR COMMUNICATIONS.

Section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015), as amended by the preceding provisions of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(l) CLEAR COMMUNICATIONS.—The Administrator shall clearly communicate full flood risk determinations to individual property owners regardless of whether their premium rates are full actuarial rates.''.

SEC. 29. PROTECTION OF SMALL BUSINESSES, NON-PROFITS, HOUSES OF WORSHIP, AND RESIDENCES.

Section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015), as amended by the preceding provisions of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(m) PROTECTION OF SMALL BUSINESSES, NON-PROFITS, HOUSES OF WORSHIP, AND RESIDENCES.—

''(1) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this section and semiannually thereafter, the Administrator shall monitor and report to Committee on Financial Services of the House Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate, the Administrator's assessment of the impact, if any, of the rate increases required under subparagraphs (A) and (D) of section 1307(a)(2) and the surcharges required under section 1308A on the affordability of flood insurance for—

''(A) small businesses with less than 100 employees;

''(B) non-profit entities;

''(C) houses of worship; and

''(D) residences with a value equal to or less than 25 percent of the median home value of properties in the State in which the property is located.

''(2) RECOMMENDATIONS.—If the Administrator determines that the rate increases or surcharges described in paragraph (1) are having a detrimental effect on affordability, including resulting in lapsed policies, late payments, or other criteria related to affordability as identified by the Administrator, for any of the properties identified in subparagraphs (A) through (D) of such paragraph, the Administrator shall, not later than 3 months after making such a determination, make such recommendations as the Administrator considers appropriate to improve affordability to the Committee on Financial Services of the House Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.''.

SEC. 30. MAPPING.

Section 100216(d)(1) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (42 U.S.C. 4101b(d)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) by striking ''subparagraph (A)'' and inserting ''subparagraph (D)''; and

(B) by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) by redesignating subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) as subparagraphs (D), (E), and (G), respectively;

(3) by inserting before subparagraph (B), as so redesignated, the following new subparagraphs:

''(A) before commencement of any mapping or map updating process, notify each community affected of the model or models that the Administrator plans to use in such process and provide an explanation of why such model or models are appropriate;

''(B) provide each community affected a 30-day period beginning upon notification under subparagraph (A) to consult with the Administrator regarding the appropriateness, with respect to such community, of the mapping model or models to be used; provided that consultation by a community pursuant to this subparagraph shall not waive or otherwise affect any right of the community to appeal any flood hazard determinations;

''(C) upon completion of the first Independent Data Submission, transmit a copy of such Submission to the affected community, provide the affected community a 30-day period during which the community may provide data to Administrator that can be used to supplement or modify the existing data, and incorporate any data that is consistent with prevailing engineering principles;''; and

(4) by inserting after subparagraph (E), as so redesignated, the following new subparagraph:

''(F) not less than 30 days before issuance of any preliminary map, notify the Senators for each State affected and each Member of the House of Representatives for each congressional district affected by the preliminary map in writing of—

''(i) the estimated schedule for—

''(I) community meetings regarding the preliminary map;

''(II) publication of notices regarding the preliminary map in local newspapers; and

''(III) the commencement of the appeals process regarding the map; and

''(ii) the estimated number of homes and businesses that will be affected by changes contained in the preliminary map, including how many structures will be that were not previously located in an area having special flood hazards will be located within such an area under the preliminary map; and''.

SEC. 31. DISCLOSURE.

(a) CHANGES IN RATES RESULTING FROM THIS ACT.—Not later than the date that is 6 months before the date on which any change in risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program resulting from this Act or any amendment made by this Act is implemented, the Administrator shall make publicly available the rate tables and underwriting guidelines that provide the basis for the change.

(b) REPORT ON POLICY AND CLAIMS DATA.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the Congress a report on the feasibility of—

(A) releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program; and

(B) establishing guidelines for releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program in accordance with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the Privacy Act of 1974).

(2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) an analysis and assessment of how releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program will aid policy holders and insurers to understand how the Administration determines actuarial premium rates and assesses flood risks; and

(B) recommendations for protecting personal information in accordance with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the Privacy Act of 1974).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from West Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous materials for the RECORD on H.R. 3370, as amended, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from West Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1½ minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

Last Congress, overwhelming majorities in the House and Senate, including all of my colleagues from West Virginia, voted for the passage of Biggert-Waters. There was near unanimous agreement that significant reforms were needed for the program, but when the new flood insurance rates were published last fall, I began to hear from, and met with, many West Virginians who were shocked by the increases in their flood insurance bills that had far exceeded the worst-case scenario in CBO's projection. In some cases, their only choice was to spend their life's savings on their flood insurance bills or walk away from their house, ruining their credit.

The bill before us today will make sure the people who purchased a home after the passage of Biggert-Waters, only to see their premiums skyrocket, can stay in their homes. Under this bill, homeowners will see their premiums rise towards an actuarially sound rate, but on a path that is much more affordable.

Additionally, we are taking steps to fix some of the mapping issues in the flood program. Many of my constituents have told me that they are in a Special Flood Hazard Area, despite no evidence of the area ever flooding. These two issues address the core problems of the flood insurance program: unaffordable rates and incorrect mapping.

There is no question that the NFIP is broken. We need to take steps to put it

on solid financial footing, but immediately hitting people with crushing increases in their premiums just because they bought a new home is not the way to do it, and that was never the original intent of Biggert-Waters.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3307, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

Today, I am pleased to lead the Democratic Party in delivering this message to the thousands of Americans who are facing unaffordable flood insurance premiums: relief is on the way.

As we committed to many months ago, Democrats have worked to fix this problem from the moment we heard about the unintended consequences of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act.

Mr. Speaker, because I am the Waters of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act, I felt a responsibility to make sure that we deal with the concerns that were coming to us from our constituents all over this country. The rate increases were unimaginable. So Democratic lawmakers in the House and the Senate took action, spearheading bipartisan legislation that passed the Senate and garnered the support of a majority of the House of Representatives.

Today, we have worked in good faith with Republican leadership to achieve a measure that isn't perfect but that will provide real relief to the thousands of families currently facing unaffordable premiums.

I believe this House measure strikes an important balance, addressing affordability concerns, bringing accountability to FEMA, and protecting the stability of the National Flood Insurance Program. The legislation ends dramatic increases caused by events such as property sales and restores grandfathered rates for those who played by the rules and built their properties according to code.

For families hit by unaffordable premium increases, this bill provides important relief in the form of a refund.

I am proud of the dramatic improvements to this bill that were made by the Democratic Caucus. These include reasonable limitations on rate increases that one property can experience, including those newly mapped into flood zones. We have ensured that when FEMA engages in the process of remapping, it actually works with communities to make sure it is being done accurately. We have made FEMA more accountable by requiring it provide clear and accurate information to anyone who may be affected by a change in policy.

Mr. Speaker, this bill would not have come together without strong support and participation from the Democratic Party. I would like to thank Leader PELOSI and Whip HOYER, as well as Senator MARY LANDRIEU and Representative CEDRIC RICHMOND for their leadership, and the leadership of so many Democratic Members across the country, which was critical to taking this bill over the finish line. I applaud them. I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Let me just say a word of thanks to someone very special on this, Mr. ERIC CANTOR, who weighed in and did everything possible to work this out in a way that we could all be comfortable with. I am pleased for the opportunity I have had to work with him. I also thank Mr. GRIMM. We started this out when others believed that we could not do anything about it. Having said all of that, we have come together to do something good for the people of this country.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GRIMM), the author of this legislation and someone without whose hard work we wouldn't be here today.

Mr. GRIMM. Thank you, Chairwoman.

Mr. Speaker, it is almost surreal standing here right now. I almost don't believe that I am about to vote on something that I promised my constituents. It is surreal because I am standing here about to do something that was the reason I ran for Congress—to be able to lead on an issue and solve a problem and come home and tell people we actually got something done that is going to change your life for the better.

I have to say a special thank you to MAXINE WATERS, the ranking member, whom I worked with from the beginning; my dear friend, GREGORY MEEKS; CEDRIC RICHMOND; and Congressman CASSIDY, who helped me write this bill. Without him, I could not have gotten this done. FRANK LOBIONDO has been tremendous, as well as Congressman PALAZZO. ERIC CANTOR has been an absolute champion on this issue.

I just have to say this is truly a collaborative effort.

□ 1730

You cannot have a more bipartisan bill. At a time when there has been gridlock and gamesmanship, we have come together to deal with a very, very important issue because it goes to the heart of what we are here to do: make people's lives a little bit better.

So I just want to say thank you to so many that worked so hard, and I will leave the rest of the time for those of my colleagues to explain some particulars of the bill. Again, thank you so much.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) who has worked so hard on this bill, who serves on the Financial Services Committee and has been intimately involved with it.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, let me first thank Ranking Member WATERS and my good friend, MICHAEL GRIMM, for working collectively to make this bill happen.

You see, it was just 17 months ago that residents in my congressional district, the Fifth Congressional District of New York, and others throughout America were devastated by Superstorm Sandy. Little did they know then that they were about to be hit by another storm.

Then came FEMA with astronomical rate increases to their flood insurance program. Two strikes in the midst of severe recession, and many of them were out.

This bill, today, once we pass it, and once the Senate passes it, it will finally give relief to individuals who were wondering what they were going to do, many whom had to pay already these astronomical rates. Help is on its way. You will get reimbursed.

Many who did not know what the values of their property would be and, if they choose down the road to sell it, whether they would be able to do it. Help is on its way. This bill fixes that.

I congratulate both sides.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING), the chairman of the full committee.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, our Nation is, tragically, going broke. Our national debt, which has skyrocketed under this President, is clearly, by any measure, on a dangerous and unsustainable path, a path that, if unaltered, will leave our children with less freedom, fewer opportunities, and a lower standard of living. That is beyond unfair. That is immoral.

One reason America is going broke is because of poorly designed and costly government-run insurance programs. The National Flood Insurance Program is one such program.

Its chief administrator has already testified that ''the NFIP was, by statute and design, not actuarially sound.'' In fact, the program charges only 70 percent of what its administrators believe they actually need. Perhaps that is why the program is currently $24 billion in the red to taxpayers and has no way to ever repay them.

The NFIP is not financially sound because pretty much every policyholder receives taxpayer subsidies. Some get explicit subsidies because the law prohibits the program from charging a full and fair rate based upon their calculated actuarial risk.

Others receive implicit subsidies because, according to the GAO, the program uses a faulty model that undermeasures flood risk.

At the end of the day, the program forces roughly 96 percent of all Americans to subsidize the remaining 4 percent, regardless of income or need. That means a single mom in Dallas, where I live, who is working hard as a cashier at the Albertsons grocery store may be forced to subsidize the flood insurance for some millionaire's beachfront vacation home. If that is not the definition of unfair, I don't know what is.

To its credit, in 2012, Congress recognized that the government-run flood insurance program was fundamentally broken and unfair. We passed, almost unanimously, the Biggert-Waters Act. It phases out most of the explicit subsidies over the next few years and requires rates to be more closely based on a property's actuarial degree of flood risk.

Now, the first premiums under Biggert-Waters are starting to come due. There is sticker shock, some based on fact, some based on fear.

Clearly, there are many, many, across our Nation who have been unaware of their taxpayer-funded subsidies. There are some who simply can't afford the new premiums, and others who are now having trouble attempting to sell their homes.

This should be addressed by Congress, and that is why, over the last 8 weeks, Chairman NEUGEBAUER and myself have put four different plans on the tables for Members who approached us about making modifications to the Biggert-Waters Act.

We agreed to go slower on reforms and to temporarily cap payments as long as the program would eventually require all property owners to pay the fair amount that they owe and, overall, the program would begin to bring in more income so taxpayers could avoid yet another bailout.

Regrettably, that is not the approach we are debating today. The House bill before us, although technically PAYGO compliant, would postpone actuarially sound rates for perhaps a generation. It would kill off a key element of risk-based pricing permanently, which is necessary if we are to ever transition to market competition.

Finally, it creates brand new subsidies for a program that is already bailout broke.

Mr. Speaker, the Senate bill isn't any better. It essentially represents a 4-year freeze that is not PAYGO compliant. My fear is that either bill represents a big step backwards from reform and leaves us just a few hurricanes or a few short years away from the next taxpayer bailout.

Either bill will make it incredibly difficult to do what Congress must do, and that is phase out this unneeded, government-run insurance program that fundamentally represents both an unfair and unsustainable middle-income entitlement.

I respect my colleagues who have a different view. I respect my leadership for bringing a bill that may not be optimum to the floor.

But, Mr. Speaker, if we don't protect taxpayers today, how will we ever reform the gargantuan middle-income entitlements that put us on the precipice of a debt crisis?

I, for one, will vote ''no'' on this well-intended but misguided bill.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND), one of the coauthors of the bill that we put together to deal with this issue who has been working very hard on it.

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member WATERS, and thank you to the Republican leadership who brought this up.

We often hear in this Chamber over and over again a talk of a financial bankruptcy that is plaguing or potentially plaguing our country, and we say it so much so that we start to believe it, and we miss one thing: that we are on the verge of a moral bankruptcy in this country.

When you talk about homeowners who played by the rules, saved their money, bought a piece of the American Dream, and then all of a sudden, years, if not decades later, we come back with a well-intentioned bill but that had unfortunate, unintended consequences that would strip the American Dream and homeownership right from under them, then the question becomes to this Congress: What do you do about it?

I said this before and I will say it again. What real leadership does when they do something and they realize it had unintended consequences, they fix it.

Congresswoman WATERS realized that her name was attached to a bill that potentially would strip homeowners of the American Dream, of the largest piece of investment that you pass on from generation to generation, and she stepped up and said, that is not what we intended. We are going to fix it.

The Republican leadership, Mr. GRIMM, stepped up and said, this is unsustainable—and more than that, it doesn't make common sense.

So both sides came together to produce a bill that would have affordability, stability, and predictability.

We talk about rules all the time, that corporations just want to know the rules so they can play by them. Well, homeowners want to know that too, and homeowners who built to the building codes and the elevations that they were required to do at the time should not come back and be penalized later.

So I just want to, again, congratulate Congresswoman WATERS because people back in New Orleans and in Louisiana today who are celebrating Fat Tuesday and Mardi Gras and having a good time, they can just party a little bit longer knowing that we are here today and we are going to fix this problem that could strip the American Dream away from them.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER), the chairman of the Housing and Insurance Subcommittee on the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition today to H.R. 3370. The National Flood Insurance Program is in trouble. It is in deep debt, and it is putting taxpayers at risk for another government bailout.

The program was added to the GAO's ''high-risk list'' in 2006 and remains there today because of the financial exposure it represents to the American taxpayers. Today, it is over $24 billion in debt, and this number will continue to rise.

Recognizing this, Congress passed the Biggert-Waters Act in July of 2012. The act authorized the flood insurance program for 5 years and included important reforms to get it back on sound financial footing. One of these reforms was the gradual elimination of outdated rate subsidies.

In a rare display of bipartisanship, Republicans and Democrats overwhelmingly supported the notion that risk-based premiums were needed for the program to be self-sufficient and to protect the taxpayers from further bailouts. Over 400 Members of Congress voted for that.

Since then, we have heard concerns from homeowners facing sticker shock from the higher rates. I am sympathetic to those concerns, but I believe there are more responsible ways to address this bill than the bill before us today.

The Financial Services Committee put together four different proposals to address these concerns. The last one included an 8- to 10-year phase-in for rates and nearly a 2-year affordability cap of $5,000. Unfortunately, each one of these proposals were rejected because they fell short of maintaining subsidies indefinitely.

That is unfortunate because maintaining these subsidies hurts everyone in the long run. It hurts taxpayers by putting them on the hook for billions of dollars in subsidies. It hurts the Flood Insurance Program by easing its path toward insolvency. It hurts homeowners by encouraging them to build in areas that jeopardize their lives and their properties.

After more than a decade, if I have learned anything in Congress, it is that the Federal Government does a terrible job of underwriting and pricing risk. Whether it is through subsidies or failures to price risk due to political considerations, the American taxpayers, unfortunately, end up footing the bill.

What is even worse under H.R. 3370 is that the taxpayers will be subsidizing rates that benefit only 1 percent of households. More than 20 percent of the programs policies are heavily subsidized, regardless of need, and of those policyholders, 70 percent go to homes in counties with the highest property values.

While H.R. 3370 may help homeowners facing high rates in the short run, it does them a disservice by not promoting a healthy, stable financial program in the future.

For taxpayers, for homeowners and, ultimately, for the future of the flood insurance, I think we can do better. I urge my colleagues to vote against H.R. 3370.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. CAPUANO), who has spent

an awful lot of time working on this issue with all of us.

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member. I want to thank Mr. GRIMM and others for bringing this bill forward.

You have heard what the bill does. I will tell you that I want to associate myself with all of the people who support it. I actually want to associate myself with some of the remarks of people who oppose it.

I think that we need to fix the problem of short funding in the flood insurance program, but I don't think we need to do it overnight, and I don't think we need to do it on the backs of middle class people with a hammer.

So I want to fix this. I think this bill is actually a step forward to say we will fix it, but we will take some time doing it to do it right so innocent people don't get hurt.

I also want to take a minute to point out some of the things that are not in this bill that people need to be aware of. This bill does not address people who own vacation homes.

I know that some people think that everyone who owns a vacation home is a multimillionaire Donald Trump. The average income of a second homeowner is about $96,000. The average value of a second home is about $150,000.

Now, you don't see most of these homes on the Home and Garden Network because they are usually on wheels. They are made out of T–111. They are just inexpensive places that people get to bring their families.

Now, most of these homes are not on the shore, but they are, not all of them, but some of them, are in flood plains. We need to take this into account when we continue to address this issue as we move forward.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING), a member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 3370. At the outset, let me thank Congressman GRIMM, Congressman LOBIONDO, and Ranking Member WATERS for the work that they have done in bringing together a true, bipartisan bill to this floor.

The Biggert-Waters bill was well-intended, but there were unintended consequences, and some of those consequences would be absolutely devastating to hundreds, if not thousands, of constituents in my district who were devastated by Hurricane Sandy.

I would just state for the record that these people are not millionaires. They complied with the law, with all the building codes, all the ordinances. They never had any flood damage in their 50, 60 years prior to this—but their homes are devastated. To add to that the incredible increase they will get in premiums for flood insurance would be even the ultimate devastation.

So this bill is absolutely essential. Ironically, it will actually decrease Federal spending over the next 5 years, but it is important that we stand together to help those in need, people who complied with the laws, hard-working, blue-collar Americans who are proud of their homes, proud of their families, and want the opportunity to get back on their feet.

They were devastated once. Let's not allow Congress to devastate them again.

□ 1745

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from New York, Representative MALONEY, the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Capital Markets, Insurance and Government Sponsored Enterprises.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. I thank the gentlelady for her leadership and for authoring the Grimm-Waters bill, which I support.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will protect homeowners from drastic premium increases, provide relief to housing markets, and put the flood insurance program on a path to long-term solvency.

The bill will also put a stop to FEMA's reckless implementation of Biggert-Waters. The GAO found that FEMA doesn't even have the information that the GAO said was key to determining a property's actual flood risk; and yet, FEMA has gone ahead with massive premium increases anyway, based on back-of-the-envelope calculations and a shocking indifference to the impact on the middle class families that are suffering across this country because of Hurricane Sandy, many of whom are in my district.

This bill will require FEMA to actually complete the affordability study that was mandated in the prior legislation, so that independent experts can determine the best way to successfully balance the two main goals, consumer affordability and long-term solvency.

This bill would set a hard cap on rate increases at 18 percent a year and will protect families and businesses from the kinds of 500 percent rate increases that they are suffering from now.

I congratulate the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) on her leadership and Congressman GRIMM. I urge a ''yes'' vote on the Grimm-Waters bill.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. PALAZZO).

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, our bill is the result of extensive bipartisan, bicameral work over the past year. This bill is both compassionate and fiscally responsible. From the start, my priority has been to ensure that flood insurance remains available and affordable not just in Mississippi, but all across the country. Our bill meets those goals.

Many of the people who are now facing unrealistic, overnight increases followed all the rules. They went to great effort and expense to build back to FEMA standards after storms like Hurricane Katrina.

Congress never intended to punish responsible homeowners, yet that is exactly what FEMA is doing, as it implements the law with flawed maps and procedures.

These actions are threatening individuals and entire communities. I am not talking about wealthy waterfront homeowners. In south Mississippi, I am hearing from teachers, veterans, fishermen, people who work at the shipyards in support of our U.S. Navy, many 100 miles inland.

Our bill holds FEMA accountable. It provides real responsible relief and lasting reforms. I urge my colleagues to join me in strong support of this bill.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts, Representative LYNCH, who is a member of the Financial Services Committee and is also the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, U.S. Postal Service and the Census, and I thank him for his hard work in putting this bill together.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady from California for her leadership on this bill. She has been a tiger on this issue, trying to get this right.

I also want to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR) and the Republican leadership, as well as Mr. GRIMM from New York and Mr. RICHMOND from Louisiana who really, I think, without their work collectively, this would not be happening.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 3370, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act. Over the past several months, I have had the honor of working with my colleagues, both Republican and Democrat, to roll back the harmful and unintended consequences of the original Biggert-Waters Act.

This legislation that we take up today is a culmination of a lot of efforts by a lot of individuals, as well as the activism on the part of our constituents.

I have had an opportunity to attend some rallies and meetings in my district with over 1,000 people attending, where the concerns and the fears of my constituents were brought forward in great volume.

H.R. 3370, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, will do a number of things. One, it reinstitutes or expands the grandfathering provisions in section 4 from what they were in the previous bill.

A very important provision here, section 18 allows reimbursements for successful appeals. Now, what that will do is, if FEMA incorrectly—as they have in many cases—if they put homes in a flood zone incorrectly and a homeowner appeals that, they get the money that they expended for that appeal, for the surveying and technical assistance they need.

In addition, section 24 provides for a flood insurance advocate to actually work on behalf of homeowners to make sure that they get the full and meaningful appeal that they deserve and also that they understand what the flood mapping process requires.

More fundamentally, this bill is an example of what we can achieve when Congress works together, and I honestly hope that we will build on this spirit of bipartisan cooperation. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this critical bill.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LOBIONDO).

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in very strong support of this legislation, and we are about to do something tonight that doesn't happen around here very often. We are going to do a bipartisan effort that has common sense and fiscal responsibility, something that we ought to be doing more often.

This is an issue maybe that doesn't affect everyone, but if you are from a district where your constituents have had their lives and their dreams ripped apart—first by Superstorm Sandy and then by the miserable implementation of a flood insurance policy that was well-intended, but not put together—how do you go back and say you are not going to fix it?

This gives us an opportunity to give them hope for the future, to give them a chance to rebuild. 16 months later, I have still got constituents who aren't able to get back into their homes. How do you tell them they are going to have such an outrageous increase on their flood insurance, which will force them to throw their hands up and give it up?

Congress is doing the right thing tonight. We need to follow through on this, have it changed, and understand that this is the approach for the future.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey, Representative PASCRELL, and I thank him for his input on this bill.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, it must be very painful for people to watch this when affected—whether you are on a river or whether you are on the ocean—because it is painful to see that some of the people who are opposed to this bill also voted ''no'' on the Sandy relief, so they are being consistent anyway.

After Sandy, many of my constituents in towns such as Moonachie and Little Ferry are now experiencing a second blow from skyrocketing flood insurance rates. In particular, the home sale trigger has resulted in drastically higher flood insurance rates for prospective home buyers, putting a wet blanket on real estate markets in flood-prone areas.

The bill before us today contains some very important changes. It provides immediate relief to homeowners by repealing the home sale trigger and reducing the rate of possible increases. I am hopeful that we can revisit flood insurance reform in a way which will provide relief to second homes and small businesses.

Although these are important first steps, I know we can do better, and I thank all those who contributed to this legislation.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana, Dr. CASSIDY, one of the champions of this bill.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3370.

First let me say this affects almost all Americans. On this map, you can see, if there is a color, there is a chance that you are affected, and Chairman HENSARLING pointed out that Dallas is a hot spot of red.

That is a place where the woman he referred to will benefit because of this reform, and I will say that all Americans will because it is our job, in Congress, to protect the American citizen from agencies implementing laws in ways which are not sustainable.

The flood maps that FEMA has been using have questionable actuarial calculations, and there have been unrealistic rate increases.

The bill before us today, which I worked closely in developing with the gentleman from New York (Mr. GRIMM) and others, to strike the right balance, takes into consideration both fiscal solvency and consumer affordability.

First, the bill is paid for. It is paid for, and the funds will go into the NFIP reserve fund, so in the future, there will be money in the till, should there be another disaster.

Secondly, I will say that, if we don't do this, the National Flood Insurance Program will enter into a death spiral. CBO estimates that for every 10 percent increase in premiums, 1.4 percent of the subscribers drop off. If people are getting 2,000 percent premium increases, they will all drop off, which puts it into a death spiral.

I would say this is actually the fiscally responsible thing that puts the program on a glide path to actuarial soundness and, in the meantime, benefits Americans across the way.

A broad coalition of Republicans, Democrats, and Realtors have worked hard on this. I would like to thank Neil Bradley in Leader CANTOR's office; from my staff, Chris Gillott; and Richard Hoffman in Representative GRIMM's office, for a lot of tremendous work.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR).

The Florida delegation, both Democrats and Republicans, has been absolutely magnificent in helping to get us to this point, and I thank Representatives CASTOR, HASTINGS, BUCHANAN, and all of those from the Florida delegation for all of the work they have done.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. I thank the gentlewoman from California for her leadership on behalf of families all across the country.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge all of our colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 3370 that will fix this flood insurance debacle.

A year and a half ago, a bill was passed here in the House to address the solvency of the flood insurance trust fund. That was the right thing to do. Unfortunately, it had serious unintended consequences that families and businessowners and Realtors all across this Nation have been dealing with.

But I am heartened here today because, even though this Congress has an unfortunate reputation for not addressing the challenges that face families all across this country, we are going to come together here today to address a very important financial issue for families.

I would like to thank my colleagues from Florida, Congressman HASTINGS, Congressman BILIRAKIS, Congressman NUGENT, Congressman BUCHANAN, and all of our delegation for fighting, standing together to work for them. I urge all of our colleagues here today to do the same.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), a great advocate for this bill.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this legislation sponsored by my good friend from New York, Congressman GRIMM. It will provide relief for homeowners struggling to keep their homes. It will ensure that all participants in the program are treated fairly, and it will eliminate an untenable financial burden during these tough economic times.

Some allege this bill will solely benefit the rich in beachside mansions. Middle class retirees and those on fixed incomes are the ones who are suffering from rate increases of $10,000 or more. They are the ones who risk losing their homes.

If Congress fails to pass this bill, we will risk destroying all the reforms made to the National Flood Insurance Program. We cannot let the perfect be the enemy of the good.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this commonsense legislation, a solution that addresses a long-term issue and helps people immediately, and I thank Representatives WATERS, CASSIDY, and SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO for their leadership on this bill.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California, Representative GARAMENDI, who has been advising us that we really do have to make changes to the National Flood Insurance Program, and I thank him for his work.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bill, and I thank Congresswoman WATERS and Mr. GRIMM for their work.

This is desperately needed. There is a lot to be said, and a lot more work will go into this before this becomes law, but it is a major step forward.

One example: Isleton, California, in my district, in a zone that was mapped with 100-year flood protection, was downgraded by the Army Corps of Engineers and is now a high hazard area. Last year, it cost $700 a year for the flood insurance. This year, it is $7,000, which is about twice the mortgage on that $115,000 house. It is not workable.

We are seeing, across my area, insurance premiums of $10,000, $25,000. This bill would stop that, move things back,

give us time to deal with what is the fundamental problem in flood insurance, and that is the catastrophic coverage, which has to be spread out across the Nation.

□ 1800

More to be worked on, good progress, good bill. Let's vote it out of here and get this thing solved.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BUCHANAN) for his hard work.

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, flood insurance has been devastating to people in Florida. It has been in my region. I have done multiple town halls. It has gone up not 10 or 20 percent but 1,000 percent, 500 percent. Businesses can't sell their businesses. So this bill will bring some immediate relief. It also brings some certainty so people—because the market today is frozen, it will bring some certainty to people so they can buy and sell their homes.

Also, as the cochair of the Florida delegation, I want to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle because it is nice once in a while where we can work together to get something done for the American people.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Oregon, Representative BLUMENAUER.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlelady's courtesy. I have a slightly different perspective. The problem isn't FEMA. The problem is that Congress has not appropriately dealt with these issues over time.

I have spent 10, 15 years now working on flood insurance reform. This is not the last word. We are kicking the can down the road. We are putting a surcharge on other people. We are grandfathering in some of the properties that are going to get these subsidized rates and transferring it. But this money is going to run out. It is going to have to be reauthorized.

With all due respect, I think we need to look at the big picture. We have got to look at the big picture, not keep putting people back in harm's way, subsidizing people, and blaming FEMA because we don't adequately fund them and, of course, we don't want them to accurately map. We go gunnysack when that happens.

I had reservations at the time that this was too abrupt. But I am concerned that we are retreating too much on the reforms that had been made earlier, and it is going to be hard to get back, of course, until the bubble bursts, which it will.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, next I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE), a great advocate for this bill and for his State.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady from West Virginia for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, we have a flood insurance program that is broken. In fact, 18 different times in the last 5 years the National Flood Insurance Program has either expired or nearly expired because of all of the flaws and disagreements within Congress. And yet the result of that was that Biggert-Waters law of 2012 that is now being implemented in a way that is unworkable for the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I think if you look at what American families expect, they expect a flood insurance program that is both sustainable and affordable, and these two are not mutually exclusive. In fact, what we are achieving with this bill that is on the floor today will accomplish both. It will make the program sustainable for the future with real reforms, reforms that can actually be implemented in a way that will allow the program to move forward and pay for itself. In fact, this bill is fully paid for.

It also allows it to be done in a way that families can afford to pay their flood insurance premiums, because sending somebody a $10,000- or $20,000-a-year bill on a $200,000 house that never flooded is not an actuarially sound rate; it is a death sentence. Federal law should not be implemented in a way that literally forces millions of people out of their homes who played by the rules.

So what we are bringing to the floor today is an actual solution to a problem. This is not some delay. It is a real, long-term solution that pays for itself within the program with real reforms that allow people to move forward with a flood insurance program that will be sustainable and ultimately lead to a private market where you don't just have FEMA to go to, you can actually have private options as well for families. I urge its passage.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York, Ms. NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ, a member of the Financial Services Committee.

(Ms. VELÁZQUEZ asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bipartisan legislation.

Sixteen months ago, Hurricane Sandy battered New York City. Even today, efforts to rebuild continue. However, because of unforeseen consequences in previous flood insurance laws, many of the businesses, families, and homeowners affected by this storm may be hit again, this time by a flood of rising insurance premiums.

Because of how the law is structured, over 26,000 New York City homeowners and businesses will see their annual flood insurance premiums increase at least 25 percent. In some cases, people who previously paid $430 annually could see their rates rise to $5,000 or even $10,000—an unsustainable amount.

Today's bill will address these unintended consequences of last year's reforms. By eliminating the property transfer trigger, buyers and sellers will now have peace of mind.

Mr. Speaker, we all want to ensure the National Flood Insurance Program is solvent, but we must do it in a way that does not harm those who have already suffered enough.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, can you tell me how much time is remaining on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from West Virginia has 2½ minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from California has 4½ minutes remaining.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, but I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker and Members, I am very proud and very pleased about this bipartisan effort to fix a serious problem in this country. As a matter of fact, we should all be pleased because it is said by the media and others that we cannot work together. This is a time when we can demonstrate that we really do care about the citizens of this country and we recognize the problems that were created by the Biggert-Waters bill.

I said earlier that my name was on that Biggert-Waters legislation, and I certainly worked in a bipartisan effort to try and do the right thing, and, of course, some day we would like to move all of these subsidies to actuarial rates.

We have unintended consequences in Biggert-Waters, and we have set out to fix them. So I want you to know that Mr. GRIMM, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mrs. CAPITO all have worked very hard to make sure that we addressed the concerns of our constituencies.

Let me tell you, with this bill we are removing certain rate increase triggers, the reinstating of grandfathering, lower rate increases, refund of excess premium charges to homeowners, affordability study and framework; added to that, working with the bill that the Republicans brought to the floor and Democrats added to it, individual property rate increase caps, affordability goal, rate increase protection for newly mapped properties, mapping protections, consumer protections, protections of small businesses, nonprofits, houses of worship, and residences.

Mr. Speaker and Members, again, this is a bill that will address the concerns and the outcry of our constituents, some of whom were experiencing 500 and 600 percent rate increases. I tried to work with the chairman, and I was disappointed that Mr. HENSARLING saw differently. He does not support this bill, and he said so. Mr. NEUGEBAUER and Mr. HENSARLING said they had come up with other ways to deal with it. I never saw any of that. Nobody ever tried to relate to the fact that I was outreaching to try and get Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, and others who had a different opinion to come and work this out and do what we could for our constituents.

So, I am very pleased that we had Members on the opposite side of the aisle who insisted that their constituents deserved protection and that they

deserved support. Working with their leadership and Mr. CANTOR working with our leadership, with the Democrats on this side of the aisle, we have come up with something that is extremely important and effective.

Now, I must say to both sides of the aisle, we have continuing work to do. This is not a permanent fix on this. What I discovered was none of us knew enough about FEMA. We have been crying for years about remapping. We don't really know how it works. We don't know the discretion that they have in making some of these decisions. We have got to spend the next few years really learning FEMA, how it works and how it makes decisions. We should never get into this kind of a situation again because we simply have allowed them to do what they do without us being involved. They don't report to us on a yearly basis, as I would like to have them do.

So this is an opportunity for us not only to fix this problem at this time but to focus on the fact that we have got oversight responsibility that we have got to carry out to make sure that we are dealing with these issues in a way that makes good sense.

So, again, I am very proud, and I am very pleased with this bipartisan effort. I welcome the opportunity to have been able to work with some Members from the opposite side of the aisle that I had not worked with before. I think I learned a lot about them, and they learned a lot about me. I am so thankful that our leadership gave me the latitude to say go and do everything possible working with the opposite side of the aisle to get this problem fixed. So they have not only supported me, but they have supported all of the Members on our side of the aisle who have said to them that this may be one of the most important fixes that we will do this year.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the ranking member, Ms. WATERS, for her hard work on this and Mr. GRIMM, Dr. CASSIDY, and all the speakers we have had today here on both sides. We can work together to fix a definite problem, but I think we need to kind of reflect back on how did we get to this problem. We were trying to fix a bigger problem, the $24 billion hole that the Flood Insurance Program has created because of mismanagement and not looking at it correctly.

Over 400 of us voted for that bill. So we did not realize at the time the data that we were given by FEMA gave us a certain ceiling that certain folks' premiums could rise, and as we have heard today from everybody, Republicans and Democrats, no matter where you live in the country, some of the premium escalation has just been incredible. So I am proud that we are working together.

I mentioned West Virginia. We flood a lot in West Virginia. We have got a lot of hills and hollows. Richard in St. Albans came to me in October of last year. He had just bought a home before they put the new FEMA rates into effect. He thought he was going to be paying a little over $1,000 in his flood insurance program on a $150,000 house. Guess what? $14,000 was the rate that he was going to have to pay. He said:

> I am just going to walk away. I will get foreclosed on. This is my dream home.

So for Richard, that is why I think all of this is important today, and for all the other Richards out there across the country who have had sticker shock, who haven't been able to cope, who have been very upset about this and wondering, Is anybody really going to help me here?

So what I think we have learned today is whatever the scenario is, whether you are in a mountain situation by a river or if you are in an urban area in New York or if you are in Florida, that these problems were deep, expensive, and discouraging, and people were unable to understand a way out. I think that is what we are giving them today.

Many of the reforms that were built into the first Biggert-Waters bill still remain. We are refining those to make sure they make common sense. We are making sure that folks around the country can afford the homes that they have bought with the flood insurance and then get them on a glide path towards the sustainability of not just their home but also the program in general.

So I am proud of the efforts that all of us working together have had here today. I would like to encourage the other body to pass this. It is not going to work unless we get the Presidential signature that we need to make sure that we get the real relief that people need and deserve.

So with that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to this bill reauthorizing the hopelessly indebted, unworkable, unfair and failed federal flood insurance program.

The National Flood Insurance Program is hopelessly in debt, over $25 billion in fact, due to the fact that politics are responsible for setting rates, not actuarial cost. Because of this many Americans across this nation are paying rates far below what actual risk would dictate in the marketplace while others, including many who I represent, are being forced to pay into a program that they do not need or want to help subsidize lower rates for other favored groups whose risk is far greater.

In fact, over the life of the federal flood insurance program the people of my state have paid multiple times more in premiums than has been paid back in claims.

That is wrong. And this problem is expanding across the nation as the flood insurance program sinks deeper into debt.

This problem reminds me of the "risk corridors", also known as the insurance company bailout, included in Obamacare.

This Obamacare provision would be used to provide a federal taxpayer bailout to private insurance companies when premiums paid by beneficiaries do not supply enough money to pay claims.

How is the flood insurance program any different? Some have their premiums kept artificially low and then federal taxpayers are asked to pick up the tab when those areas eventually flood.

I think the "risk corridor" included in the flood insurance program is just as wrong as the one included in Obamacare.

Both Obamacare and the National Flood Insurance Program are proof that the federal government is a bad insurance company.

That is why I have continually submitted legislation to bring about a responsible end to the federal flood insurance program and allow for the creation of a private marketplace based upon actual risk.

I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing this terribly flawed bill and in finding a better way forward that brings about the end of the national flood insurance program.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Homeowners Flood Insurance Affordability Act, which removes some of the unintended consequences from the Biggert-Waters law that would increase flood insurance premiums on my constituents. This bill would repeal the premium hikes and would reinstate "grandfathered" rates for properties that were remapped into higher-risk areas.

In my own district following Superstorm Sandy, the changes in flood projections brought on by the storm will hit my constituents with higher flood insurance premiums—some as high as $10,000 extra per year unless Congress acts to mitigate the hike.

I think we can all agree that we want to address the fiscal concerns faced by the National Flood Insurance Program—but these steep, immediate rate hikes are not the way.

This is a bipartisan bill that offers immediate protection to my constituents from financially devastating flood insurance premium hikes. I urge my colleagues to vote "yes."

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act (HR 3370), and would like to thank Mr. GRIMM and Mr. LOBIONDO, all our colleagues from New Jersey, and the Republican leadership for working together to bring this much-needed legislation to the Floor.

After Superstorm Sandy devastated the Northeast, our communities rallied, coming together to help friends and neighbors recover and rebuild. While progress has been made, some shore towns and the families who live along our coast are still struggling. Thousands of homeowners are working to rebuild their properties, and their lives—and the difficulties they continue to face cannot be overstated.

The coming rate hikes will have a chilling and dramatic impact on these communities, and mitigating the consequences for homeowners along the shore is a necessary step in the recovery effort.

At the start of this year, over 80,000 flood insurance policies were in force in Monmouth, Ocean and Mercer Counties in my Congressional District. The exploding cost of flood insurance—a program that many have paid into for years—threatens to roll back much of the progress made, and once again leave homeowners looking for answers.

The bill on the floor today makes targeted and necessary reforms and will prevent massive premium increases from hitting homeowners who simply cannot afford them—and cannot find a buyer to take them on, leaving them stranded and without a solution. Many cannot afford the recommended mitigation measures that may or may not reduce their premiums, creating a further environment of uncertainty.

Accordingly, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act slows the rate of increase that was included in the 2012 Biggert-Waters reform bill, allowing homeowners to remain in their homes and plan accordingly to continue flood insurance policies.

While not perfect, this bill will provide relief and stability to these homeowners and their communities while bringing reform to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). It also provides a mechanism for enhanced community participation in the flood mapping process and increases transparency by making information publicly available to impacted parties.

Further, HR 3370 will provide individualized assistance by establishing a flood insurance advocate to help homeowners and towns obtain information and fair treatment during the mapping process. After hearing from hundreds of families, particularly in Monmouth and Ocean Counties, who are simply looking for information on how they will be impacted by changes to the flood mapping process, I am pleased that this important provision was retained in the final bill.

Mr. Speaker, there are NFIP-related issues that still must be resolved—such as ensuring proper and accurate flood mapping—but this bill is an important step in the right direction and will help mitigate the rate shock that many of my constituents are facing.

I urge my colleagues to support it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3370, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1815

YORK RIVER WILD AND SCENIC RIVER STUDY ACT OF 2013

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2197) to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate segments of the York River and associated tributaries for study for potential inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2197

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''York River Wild and Scenic River Study Act of 2013''.

SEC. 2. DESIGNATION FOR STUDY.

Section 5(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1276(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(__) YORK RIVER, MAINE.—(A) The York River that flows 11.25 miles from its headwaters at York Pond to the mouth of the river at York Harbor, and all associated tributaries.

''(B) The study conducted under this paragraph shall—

''(i) determine the effect of the designation on—

''(I) existing commercial and recreational activities, such as hunting, fishing, trapping, recreational shooting, motor boat use, bridge construction;

''(II) the authorization, construction, operation, maintenance, or improvement of energy production and transmission infrastructure; and

''(III) the authority of State and local governments to manage those activities; and

''(ii) identify—

''(I) all authorities that will authorize or require the Secretary to influence local land use decisions (such as zoning) or place restrictions on non-Federal land if designated under this Act;

''(II) all authorities that the Secretary may use to condemn property; and

''(III) all private property located in the area studied under this paragraph.''.

SEC. 3. STUDY AND REPORT.

Section 5(b) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1276(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(__) YORK RIVER, MAINE.—The study of the York River, Maine, named in paragraph (__) of subsection (a) shall be completed by the Secretary of the Interior and the report thereon submitted to Congress not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are made available to carry out this paragraph.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentlewoman from Maine (Ms. PINGREE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the legislation under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2197 authorizes the National Park Service to study 11.25 miles of the York River in the State of Maine for possible inclusion into the Wild and Scenic Rivers program.

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 was intended to put a development freeze on rivers to preserve their ''free-flowing'' characteristics. Although no immediately apparent risks to the river necessitating Federal designation have been identified, proponents of the study explained that they would benefit from the expertise of the National Park Service and its interaction with the surrounding community.

Due to a number of very real concerns that have arisen through prior designations, this bill includes several commonsense provisions aimed at better informing local property owners and communities about the full effects and impacts of a wild and scenic designation.

The National Park Service will be required to consider the effect of designation on commercial and recreational uses, such as hunting and fishing and boating. The study must also look at the impact on construction and maintenance of energy production and transmission.

Furthermore, H.R. 2197 requires the Federal Government to identify all existing authorities that could be utilized to condemn private property. We want property owners to know how much power the government will be given so they can form an educated opinion as to whether they should participate in or support a Wild and Scenic Rivers designation.

Finally, the bill will require the Federal Government to identify those authorities that compel it to become involved in local zoning. While Federal designation of the York River clearly has an appeal to the local advocates supporting this legislation, it is important for the community to be aware that the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act requires local zoning to conform to the dictates of the Federal act.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I would note that this exact legislation passed the House last Congress, but because the Senate failed to act on it, it is being considered once again in this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am very happy to stand in support of my bill, H.R. 2197, the York River Wild and Scenic Rivers Study Act, and I want to start by thanking Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. GRIJALVA, and tonight Mr. HASTINGS for their support in reporting this bill out of committee in September. I thank them and former Congressperson, now Senator MARKEY's help in passing this bill last Congress. I very much appreciate their persistence and their willingness to help get this bill passed and into law. I know the people of Maine will appreciate their commitment, too.

This bill was really proposed by the folks back home, the same people who live and work around the York River and who care deeply about it. This bill would allow organizations working around the York River to partner with the National Park Service to conduct a study that would provide the information that is vital to making smart decisions about the future of the York River and its communities.

I have heard from small business owners, community groups, State and local government, local and national land trusts, fishermen, hunters, school representatives, and historical and environmental conservationists, and all

agree that continuing to benefit from the river depends on recognizing and protecting its important and unique qualities.

There are many unique features of the York River and the ecosystems surrounding it, and I will talk about those in a minute, but I want to start with a little history.

The first English settlers came to the York River nearly 400 years ago—but there is archaeological evidence along the shores of European settlers who were here even earlier. Before anyone came from Europe, the Abenaki Indians named the river ''Agamenticus,'' which means ''little cove beyond the hills.''

When I last visited the York River, I spoke with members of the local community about the importance of the river to the people today, to the economy, and to the wildlife of the York River watershed. The river is home to important and rare species, including the Maine endangered box turtle and the threatened harlequin duck.

The salt marshes of the York River watershed serve as a nursery ground for nearly 30 species of fish that are vital to the Gulf of Maine ecosystem. The York River is a place where children are learning in an outdoor classroom. Students from nearby school districts gather data from the river for classes and to inform community decisions about the environment and the economy.

Maybe the most important factor is that many of the hardworking people in this part of the State depend on the York River to support their jobs. The York River is a place where people go to work. Commercial and recreational fishing operations depend on excellent water quality and reliable access to the waterfront. Farmers in the York River watershed grow pumpkins, potatoes, and other produce that help keep Maine communities healthy.

People travel to the York River to explore and appreciate its natural character and its incredible history, and while doing so, they invest in the surrounding communities.

The work of community groups has already resulted in considerable progress, but the York River needs additional protection so this vital resource is not overwhelmed by increasing development. In order to move forward to a future that protects the most important aspects of this waterway and the jobs and the communities that depend on it, it is vital to connect these communities with the information they need. That is the goal and hopefully the eventual outcome of this important piece of legislation.

My bill is widely supported in Maine, and I look forward to it being favorably considered today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to just point out that I have the privilege of chairing the House Natural Resources Committee, and the nature of that committee is such that we deal with a lot of important pieces of legislation, but pieces of legislation that are kind of parochial in nature with regard to a particular State. We have right now some 50 bills, both Republican and Democrat bills that have passed this House, many of them on suspension, that are still awaiting action in the Senate. In fact, this legislation—similar legislation passed the Congress last time and didn't go anywhere in the other body, and so here we are back one more time. I only mention that because we can't be the only House that passes legislation. It has to be both Houses in order to get something to the President.

I certainly hope that this legislation after two times will finally get through and the study can commence and we can proceed with looking at whether a designation would be in order.

With that in mind, let me talk a bit, because I mentioned this earlier in my remarks. What I am saying here regarding Wild and Scenic is in many ways applicable to wilderness designations. We passed a bill earlier today by voice vote that designated a wilderness area in Michigan. In both of those cases, what is common with both of them is that we have seen since the Wild and Scenic designation law passed and since the wilderness law passed, we see this especially in the Western part of the United States, that when these areas are designated either Wild and Scenic or wilderness, what happens is areas around them become de facto wilderness or de facto Wild and Scenic which many, many times imposes on private property rights.

Now we have experienced that more in the West than what my colleagues have in the East, and my colleague from Maine expressed, rightly so, this has very, very broad support. I am sure it does; they have worked very hard on it. The danger in the future is, if taken to the extreme, you could have, unless we had within the study—you could have some pressures on private property rights. We think that is sufficiently important to put that in the study so that those who will be affected know about it.

I hope the outcome is such that everybody believes, fine, we can work with whatever restrictions come up. That is the precise reason, Mr. Speaker, why when we look, and I say ''we,'' being a Member from the Western part of the United States, when we look at these designations, it becomes pretty darn rigid even when you have acts of natural disaster.

With that in mind, let me tell you about something that happened in my old district prior to redistricting. There is a wilderness area in the northern Cascades. A lot of people visit it; it is a wonderful place. But to access that from the Eastern part of the United States, you have to go up a lake; it's the only way to get there. Then you have to traverse some 10 or 20 miles to the wilderness area, and the only way to get there is by a road. Well, the road—nature washed out that road many times several years ago. It is called the Stehekin Road. The community up there has been trying to rebuild that road.

Now, what does this have to do with wild and scenic and wilderness. Well, I mentioned that sometimes these things become so rigid that you can't affect something that needs to be done. Unfortunately, the road was right on the border of a wilderness area. So naturally, when you are going to rebuild it, you have to go through a wilderness area. ''No, no,'' say all the national groups. Not the local groups, not the people who are affected, but all the national groups. ''No, you can't build this road.'' So we are now in the third Congress. The last two Congresses, we passed bills to address this issue, but we have not been able to succeed because, as I mentioned earlier, we have to go through the Senate.

I only use this as an example of how national groups with a wilderness designation, and it has happened with wild and scenic designations, have unintended consequences on the community.

This legislation says within—within—that study, we need to find out what these potential impacts could be. That is why we put that in this legislation.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to say to Mr. HASTINGS, I really do appreciate the work you have done in your committee, the bipartisan activity in your committee, and truly for your assistance in bringing this bill to the floor. I know you are preparing to retire, and I wanted to wish you the best on whatever journey happens next in your life, and thank you for your long service to your State and to the rest of us in Congress. You have been a wonderful colleague to work with. Thank you very much for that.

Representing Washington State, while we are at opposite ends of the country, I think many of the concerns you have raised and that your constituents have raised, given the fact that you have a tremendous amount of open land, you have a tremendous amount of coastal shore land, you deal with some of the same issues that those of us who reside in Maine do, and I appreciate you bringing that perspective to this bill and to the many bills you have worked with.

I would just add in speaking about this particular program, it was really a wonderful experience for me when the many residents of this community, as I mentioned earlier, from all diverse walks of life, some of them were farmers and some of them were fishermen who depend on the river, some who care deeply about the history, but all of them came together, people who

hadn't necessarily had the opportunity to work together before, but realized this is a very important concern, and that this particular river has enormous impacts. Because this river is in the southern part of my district, which means it is close to the southern border of Maine, it is surrounded by a very developed part of our State, although not much is that developed in Maine. We are one of the most rural States in the country with only 1.3 million people, so we are not a particularly overdeveloped State, but this is part of the southern part of the State, where there is a lot of activity going on, and people were concerned even more so because they wanted to make sure that when visitors come to our State, when residents decide to make it their home, we can count on the fact that there will be this part of the river and the area around it that will be looked at very closely when thinking about future uses and how to make sure that it is always there for those people who depend on it for jobs, for the fishing industries that are so critically important, and for the communities that care deeply about its history and about the activities that go on there. That is part of what has made this bill so particularly important to our State. I am extremely grateful to everyone on the committee who worked to help us bring it to the floor.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her kind words, and I support this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for the York River Wild and Scenic River Study Act of 2013.

I want to thank my friend and colleague, Representative PINGREE, for her leadership on this bill.

A healthy York River is important to the economic and environmental vitality of Southern Maine. The river is used daily by fishermen and recreational boat users, and its beauty is a significant part of the tourist economy that is so integral to Southern Maine. The river is an important home for wildlife, providing a home to more than 100 waterbirds and 28 species of fish.

This important legislation would create a study to determine whether or not the York River and its tributaries should be included in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Program. The study would help evaluate current and future demands on the river, and determine whether or not extra federal protection is necessary to keep the river strong and healthy.

Individuals, businesses, and wildlife depend on the York River. We must keep it strong and healthy for years to come.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2197.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1830

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 3370, by the yeas and nays;

H. Res. 488, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The remaining electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3370) to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 306, nays 91, not voting 33, as follows:

[Roll No. 91]

YEAS—306

Amodei
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Black
Blackburn
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brooks (IN)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Cassidy
Castor (FL)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Collins (NY)
Connolly
Conyers
Costa
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Daines
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Gardner
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Al
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grijalva
Grimm
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Herrera Beutler
Himes
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Hunter
Israel
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
LaMalfa
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
Latta
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Lowenthal
Lowey
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marino
Matheson
Matsui
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Noem
Nolan
Nugent
Nunnelee
O'Rourke
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Polis
Posey
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schock
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Southerland
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Whitfield
Wilson (FL)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoho
Young (AK)

NAYS—91

Aderholt
Amash
Bachmann
Bachus
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Blumenauer
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Broun (GA)
Burgess
Camp
Carter
Chabot
Cole
Collins (GA)
Conaway
Cook
Cooper
Cotton
Culberson
DeFazio
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Garrett
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Hall
Hensarling
Higgins
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Jordan
Joyce
Kline
Lamborn
Lucas
Lummis
Marchant
Massie
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
Meadows
Miller (MI)
Mulvaney
Neugebauer
Nunes
Paulsen
Pearce
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Pompeo
Price (GA)
Ribble
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Shuster
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Waxman
Westmoreland
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Yoder
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—33

Bishop (UT)
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brown (FL)
Cárdenas
Castro (TX)
Chaffetz
Coble
Crawford
DesJarlais
Doggett
Duffy
Ellmers
Fincher
Gosar
Green, Gene
Gutiérrez
Hinojosa
Jackson Lee
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
King (IA)
Labrador
Lankford
McCarthy (NY)
Pastor (AZ)
Rush
Schwartz
Sessions
Smith (TX)
Stockman
Veasey

□ 1856

Messrs. FRANKS of Arizona, BRIDENSTINE, KLINE, ISSA, and BACHUS changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mses. McCOLLUM, WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Messrs. HUFFMAN and HUNTER changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING THE PEOPLE OF VENEZUELA AS THEY PROTEST PEACEFULLY FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 488) supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democratic change and calling to end the violence, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 393, nays 1, not voting 36, as follows:

[Roll No. 92]

YEAS—393

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bera (CA)
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Black
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cartwright
Cassidy
Castor (FL)
Chabot
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Cotton
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Daines
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
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Lowenthal
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Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
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Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
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McCarthy (CA)
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NOT VOTING—36

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Broun (GA)
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Castro (TX)
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Crawford
DesJarlais
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Gosar
Green, Gene
Gutiérrez
Hinojosa
Jackson Lee
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
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King (IA)
Labrador
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Lofgren
McCarthy (NY)
Pastor (AZ)
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Schwartz
Sessions
Smith (TX)
Stockman
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□ 1904

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title was amended so as to read: ''Supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democracy, a reduction in violent crime and calling for an end to recent violence.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, today, the fourth day of March 2014, I was unable to cast votes on the following recorded votes. My flight from Chattanooga, Tennessee was delayed due to mechanical issues. Had I been present, on rollcall vote No. 91, H.R. 3370, I would have voted ''no;'' on rollcall vote No. 92, H. Res. 488, I would have voted ''aye.''

AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 3370, HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that, in the engrossment of H.R. 3370, the Clerk be authorized to make the corrections now at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the corrections.

The Clerk read as follows:

On page 4, line 6, strike ''promulgate such regulations, and''.

On page 4, line 12, strike ''Iimplementation'' and insert ''Implementation''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from West Virginia?

There was no objection.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3826, ELECTRICITY SECURITY AND AFFORDABILITY ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4118, SUSPENDING THE INDIVIDUAL MANDATE PENALTY LAW EQUALS FAIRNESS ACT

Mr. BURGESS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report

(Rept. No. 113–373) on the resolution (H. Res. 497) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3826) to provide direction to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the establishment of standards for emissions of any greenhouse gas from fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4118) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to delay the implementation of the penalty for failure to comply with the individual health insurance mandate, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

FLOOD INSURANCE BILL

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as an original cosponsor of H.R. 3370, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014.

Over the past decade, the National Flood Insurance Program has bordered on insolvency, and today it is over $24 million in debt. Congress, in 2012, passed the Biggert-Waters Act, which created much-needed reforms to the program that were designed to more accurately reflect insurance risks and create fiscal solvency. The law mandated that the Federal Emergency Management Agency perform an affordability study before transitioning to the newly weighted system, which they failed to do and has led to devastating flood insurance premium increases.

Mr. Speaker, there are those who think we should do nothing and let government mismanagement ruin the economic health of our communities. We cannot run away from pressing challenges. To the contrary, we must correct this policy failure in a manner that strikes a balanced solution without adding one dime to the Federal deficit.

H.R. 3370 enables Congress to develop a long-term solution that protects local economies and holds government accountable.

RECOGNIZING GABBIE ST. PETER AND ALICE WILLETTE

(Ms. PINGREE of Maine asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk for a minute about two very special young girls from Waterville, Maine.

Gabbie St. Peter and Alice Willette both celebrated their eighth birthdays last month and are in the second grade at the George J. Mitchell Elementary School. Since their birthdays are just a day apart, they decided to have a joint birthday party. But instead of presents, these two extraordinary girls asked their friends to bring the items most in need at their school's food pantry.

This amazing act of generosity and community spirit came straight from Gabbie and Alice themselves. There was never a suggestion from a parent or a teacher to do this. They planned it all themselves.

I would have to agree with their teacher, Sherril Saulter, who said these two girls have some of the biggest hearts she has ever seen. Their compassion and generosity is inspiring, and I want to recognize and thank these two emerging leaders from Maine, Gabbie St. Peter and Alice Willette, for recognizing not only that no one in their community should go hungry, but also that they have the power to effect change.

THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS

(Mr. OLSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, on March 2, 1836, 178 years ago, the Republic of Texas was born with the signing of the Texas Declaration of Independence. The last paragraph on the sacred document reads:

> We, therefore, the delegates with plenary powers of the people of Texas, in solemn convention assembled, appealing to a candid world for the necessities of our condition, do hereby resolve and declare, that our political connection with the Mexican nation has forever ended, and that the people of Texas do now constitute a free, Sovereign, and independent republic, and are fully invested with all the rights and attributes which properly belong to independent nations; and, conscious of the rectitude of our intentions, we fearlessly and confidently commit the issue to the decision of the Supreme arbiter of the destinies of nations.

May God always bless and never forget the Republic of Texas.

□ 1915

CONGRATULATING SCHENECTADY GREENMARKET ON THEIR 5-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

(Mr. TONKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Schenectady Greenmarket on their 5-year anniversary. In the half-decade since they opened their doors to the Capital Region of New York, the Schenectady Greenmarket has worked to prove that our economy and nutrition benefit when we eat local and buy local.

Schenectady Greenmarket continues to find ways to bolster public health by providing farm-to-table meals to our friends and neighbors in the Capital Region and, most recently, partnering with MVP Health Care to build a healthier, more nutrition-focused community.

I had the privilege of attending Schenectady Greenmarket's 5-year anniversary last Sunday, and was pleased to see firsthand the good work and services this nonprofit organization provides our area.

I applaud the many farmers, producers, vendors, certainly musicians, volunteers, and staff who make the Greenmarket successful.

Again, I congratulate Schenectady Greenmarket on their anniversary, and I look forward to celebrating many more milestones to come.

PRESERVING ACCESS TO SLEEPING BEAR DUNES

(Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, tonight the House passed legislation addressing an issue that is near and dear to my heart and very important to Michigan involving Sleeping Bear Dunes National Park.

For years, there has been a back and forth between the community surrounding Sleeping Bear Dunes and the National Park Service over the best way to make sure that this pristine treasure is accessible to the public.

I have personally been involved in this process for over a decade, and I am glad to see my friend and colleague, Dr. DAN BENISHEK, who now represents the area, pick up the legislative torch that my friend Pete Hoekstra and I—we introduced bills to protect the Sleeping Bear Dunes, and Dan has finally been able to take it across the finish line.

This bipartisan and bicameral solution ensures that beaches will remain open, public roads can be improved, hunting and fishing will continue to be allowed, and private property rights are actually protected.

Tonight's legislative achievement would not be possible without the hard work and tireless efforts of local citizens, local business owners, and local advocacy groups such as the Coalition for Access to the Lakeshore.

I look forward to President Obama signing this much-needed piece of legislation and the benefits that there will be for the visitors to the park, the local residents, and small businesses throughout northern Michigan.

Most importantly, let's see Sleeping Bear Dunes preserved for generations to come.

COAL-FIRED POWER UNIT SHUTDOWN

(Mrs. LUMMIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, later this month, in the State of Wyoming, a coal-fired power unit is going to shut down production for the very last time. This is going to happen 10 years before its useful life has diminished.

This is happening because of Federal regulations. This is inexpensive, abundant, coal-fired power which serves the

people of this country being cut down 10 years before the useful life of this plant is spent. This is a travesty of Federal regulation which will cost the American people more than it should for their own power.

You are going to be hearing more about this later this month from me, Mr. Speaker. This is not the last word.

DEEPENING THE SAVANNAH RIVER

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, in Georgia, 352,000 jobs are related to the Port of Savannah. It is a major export facility exporting 62 percent of the goods that go through there.

We would have even more jobs if we deepened the Savannah River from 42 to 47 feet. In fact, the payoff, the cost-benefit analysis is a dollar spent and a $5.50 return. Yet, after 14 years and $41 million worth of study, Congress, the bureaucracy, just barely has said let's go forward.

Congress, in January, signaled that we had had enough; cut the red tape, get the project moving, and classified it as a project under construction.

The President and Vice President have repeatedly said they support the project, yet, to my shock, and those of us in Congress, in their budget, which just has come out, they have not funded this important job-creating project. I do not understand it.

I am astounded by an administration who claims to say this is the year of action. Why would they not move forward on deepening the Savannah River?

Three hundred and fifty-two thousand jobs are related to this, cost-benefit analysis of 1 to 5.5. Yet, the administration continues to dither.

NUCLEAR ENERGY

(Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the nuclear energy sector. Not only do nuclear power plants provide affordable reliable energy, they also provide many quality, high-paying jobs and are the backbone of many communities.

My district is home to a nuclear plant in Clinton, Illinois, that employs nearly 700 people. Nuclear energy is a secure energy source that plays a vital role in a responsible all-of-the-above energy policy. It is the biggest provider of reliable, efficient clean energy, and it provides on-demand energy 24/7.

The recent record cold temperatures in the Midwest show the importance of energy diversification. Many of my constituents saw steep increases in their electric bill.

While pipes froze and transportation became difficult because of iced roads and bridges, nuclear power remained consistent. I worry that things could have become worse if nuclear power wasn't able to fill the gaps where needed.

This is why I stand here today in support of nuclear energy and all of my constituents and the hardworking taxpayers of Clinton and Central Illinois.

MAKE IT IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAMALFA). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for this opportunity to delve into what is a major piece of our work here in Washington, and that is the budget and the appropriation process.

Today is one of those very, very important days in the process of government. Today the President delivered to Congress his proposed budget. It is required by the Constitution. George Washington did it, and every President since that time has done it every year, and today, we have President Obama's budget before us.

I want to spend a few moments on that budget, together with my friend from New York, Mr. PAUL TONKO and our East-West show. So we have got California and New York here.

I would like to start off by kind of framing my own work and how I think we really need to approach what we do here.

This is from Franklin Delano Roosevelt during the Great Depression, and he laid out this test. It is on the Roosevelt Memorial here. It is etched into the granite stone there. It says: ''The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much. It is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.''

It is how I like to frame the issues, and I think we can frame the President's budget that way, and also, this way:

Those of you that have seen us here on the floor, Mr. TONKO and myself, we often and usually talk about this issue of Making It in America, rebuilding the great American middle class by rebuilding the manufacturing sector of America.

Twenty years ago, actually 24 years ago, it was about 20 million, 19-plus million Americans were in that manufacturing sector. They were making everything from wine to automobiles and jet planes and even computers. Then we lost it. Maybe 11 million right now.

We are beginning to see the rebuilding of the manufacturing base, and along with that, we will see the American middle class rise up once again and be able to support their families, be able to take care of those things like food and shelter and education.

These are the seven ways that we talk about this. The President's budget picks up many of these, and I want to just focus on some of them tonight. My friend, Mr. TONKO, will pick up the energy piece.

In the President's budget, there are these key sectors, tax policy, education, research, infrastructure. Let's start at the bottom and work to the top.

The President has proposed a $305 billion, 4-year transportation program for the United States. Now, anybody that has driven today here in the East Coast or in the West Coast knows that we have gridlock, we have transportation problems of all kinds.

So the President comes forward with this major initiative, really, a significant increase in what we have done in the past. He wants to focus it, first, on repairing what we already have, the potholes, the bridges that have fallen down and others that might, saying let's get to that.

He then goes about building the more modern transportation systems that we need, expanding our highway program, but also the rail systems, the inner city rail, the inter-city rails, and the street cars and other kinds of mass transportation systems; very, very important.

He proposes how we pay for it. He says, we ought not give the oil companies, the Big Four, a $5 billion annual tax break, literally giving them our money at the gas pump, but also giving them our tax money in unnecessary subsidies.

He has other proposals in this part of the budget so that this would be fully paid for. That is the infrastructure piece.

One of our colleagues here on the floor just a few moments ago was talking about deepening the Savannah River port. Yes, we ought to do that, and the other ports. We know the Panama Canal is going to be widened, and when it is widened, we are going to have larger ships, deeper draft. We need to deepen our ports.

That is an infrastructure project, and the President's budget directly focuses on that.

Why is this important for individuals?

Because these are jobs, these are American jobs in construction, and if we will couple it with one more thing that I have proposed, and that is that these taxpayer programs buy American-made equipment so that the steel for the bridges, the concrete, so that the trains, so that the other things that will be part of this infrastructure, the pumps and all that goes with rebuilding the levees and the sanitation systems and the water system, that they be American-made equipment and supplies.

In doing that, we not only put people to work on the infrastructure projects, but we, once again, make it in America, and we rebuild the American manufacturing.

I would like now to turn to my colleague, Mr. TONKO, who wants to pick up a special piece of this, the energy piece in the President's budget.

Mr. TONKO. Thank you Representative GARAMENDI, and thank you for introducing on this House Floor some of the concepts that have been presented by the President in his budget presentation to Congress.

Certainly, I have been waiting with great anticipation as to what the energy portion of this budget might look like. Why?

Because I think it is a cornerstone. Energy policy, energy resources are those cornerstones of rebuilding our American economy, to grow the economy, and to strengthen the prospects out there for job creation in the private sector by creating that partnership, public-private partnership where the private sector will grow those jobs.

Also, I am curious because of my past roles as energy chair, the energy committee chair in the New York State Assembly, a role that I held for some 15 years, and also my leadership in NYSERDA, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, prior to my coming to Congress.

Now sitting on Energy and Commerce as a committee assignment, I have great, great interest in where the President wants to take us on the energy issues, and I am very favorably impressed by some of the down payments that he wants to make.

Certainly, with the $2.3 billion that he is offering for the Department of Energy in the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, that effort, I think, is going to launch us into a new series of innovation that allows for job creation and a reduced cost of electricity and, certainly, a drawing us down on this gluttonous dependency on fossil-based fuels as the cornerstone of our energy economy.

□ 1930

So I think that this effort will, within EERE, the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Office, provide for that growing effort to promote efficiency. That ought to be our fuel of choice. This investment allows us to accept that notion and then, also, to work on efforts that will enable us to focus our efforts out there that are required for energy.

Renewable energy, no fuel costs with the sun, the wind, the soil, the water, that is part of our environment. Utilizing that in a way that generates electricity and does it in a benign way is a very strong cornerstone advanced by the President in this effort.

And also, the $4.2 billion that he brings forth in efforts to provide for innovation and to create new outcomes for energy purposes not only with efficiency and generation, but the transmission of that energy supply and looking at efforts to expand and make permanent the production tax credits that are so important for renewable energy in this country, so those are two good, very valuable investments.

Let me then just highlight a few others that I believe will be a progressive outcome, if we are to accept this notion here in Congress. One would be to address a clean energy research program, and the President does that with a major down payment for clean energy research.

He also addresses the Advanced Research Projects Agency in the energy capacity, acronymed out as ARPA–E. It mimics DARPA from the Defense Department, and what it does is commit a very laser-sharp focus on research as it relates to innovation in the energy sector.

Will all those outcomes be successful? Perhaps not. In fact, the character—the quality of research is that failure can be the down payment to success. So where the failure will be realized, we will retest, we will recommit our energies to fine-tune and come forth with the success stories that are required.

ARPA–E, in its short 5 years, has proven to be a very valuable investment in energy innovation. The President makes a major investment in his budget for ARPA–E. I was just with over 2,000 representatives from the ARPA–E network who came to town—came to Washington to discuss the future of the program.

I am impressed with the leadership, coming both in EERE and ARPA–E in the Department of Energy, and the President acknowledges that—recognizes it by making these commitments in his budget.

And finally, if I might, Representative GARAMENDI, I will talk about the advanced fuels agenda, where $700 million will be invested in the transportation sector, so that we have advanced fuels. We need to be weaned off of this gluttonous dependency on fossil fuels.

So these are very promising investments suggested by the President and the administration, those that will take us into a cutting-edge, new millennium sort of thinking that enables us to continue with that pioneer spirit in this country, which has always guided us and lifted us out of tough economic times.

I am encouraged by these commitments and look forward to the budget work that we need to do here in the House of Representatives and working with our partners in the United States Senate, but I think the President has set a good tone.

He has ushered in some good thinking, and he is looking at a new wave of energy concepts that will guide this Nation in job production, in sound energy policy, and will have benign impacts on our environmental resources. As stewards of the environment, I think that is important for all of us.

So I thank you for leading this discussion this evening, and I am impressed with the energy portion, so I thank you, Representative GARAMENDI.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you very much, Mr. TONKO, and thank you for your years of service in the area of energy and for moving this entire program forward.

I think there is another very, very important piece of this, and that is that the climate is changing. The climate is changing. We know that the greenhouse gases have passed the 400 mark, which was thought to be the point of no return.

Hopefully, that is not the case, but we do know that, in the President's budget, he goes after this issue of climate change with the kind of programs that you talked about, about the programs supporting renewable energy, making permanent the energy tax credits for renewables, which is very, very important in my district.

I have a major wind farm that starts and stops, depending upon whether the production tax credit is renewed here in Congress. Right now, it is stopping, and that is a major part of the potential energy that we need.

The President talks about an all-of-the-above strategy, and yes, we ought to do that. One of those strategies is a natural gas strategy, which is now replacing coal in our power plants and, when properly managed—that is, methane doesn't leak—it is clear that we will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by that strategy. There are many, many different pieces to this. You spoke so well to it.

I want to just pick up a couple of others very, very quickly, and it is a part of this Make It In America, particularly the manufacturing. The President proposes that we create more advanced manufacturing hubs.

These are innovation hubs. There are several in the United States. He wants to put more of these out there. They have coupled the research with the manufacturing, and that allows for the advancement here.

He also does one thing that is very important in this, and that is the education and the reeducation of our workers and our students. I was at an extraordinary manufacturing facility in Yuba City over the weekend, and they make bearings.

I am not talking about these little ball bearings that you find in small appliances and the like. We are talking about bearings that are huge. These weigh several tons. They are the bearings on a shaft in a hydroelectric plant, maybe 2 or 3 feet in diameter.

I had no idea this existed there, and the one thing they wanted me to know was that they cannot find skilled machinists that are able and capable of doing that work.

In the President's budget, he has a major program to train and retrain the workers of tomorrow, men and women that will do not only the computer work, but also men and women that are capable of becoming the machinists of tomorrow, so that we are able, in America, to produce these very extraordinarily important, unique pieces of equipment, like the shafts, the turbines, and in this case, the bearings that are so important to make those things work.

So there is this whole complex in the President's budget—education, early childhood education, going after climate change with energy, going after infrastructure—as we talked about earlier.

There are many more pieces of this puzzle, and as we come back in the future, I want us to pick up each individual piece, talk to the American public about what is in the President's budget, and hopefully persuade our Republican colleagues to go along with this pro-growth deficit reduction budget that the President has proposed.

I think, with that, I will turn it over to you, and if you don't have any more comments, we will call it a night.

Mr. TONKO. Representative GARAMENDI, just in closing, I would state that three very important underpinnings to a modern economy—a transitioning economy, one that drives innovation—would be the investments in research, the investments in infrastructure, the investments in education; and we begin to see that in this budget.

I think the efforts here are a good challenge and a charge to this Congress to respond accordingly. That will lift us into a cutting-edge thinking that enables us to compete effectively in what is a worldwide race, as it relates to clean energy innovation and high tech.

We need these investments in order to be strong. We won the global race on space back in the sixties because we committed to winning that race, and that was just against another nation, Russia.

Now, there are dozens of nations competing to be the kingpin of the international economy. The President rightfully sees that as the opportunity for this Nation to invest accordingly, so that we can move forward; and again, with his efforts in advanced manufacturing, with the NNMI, the manufacturing initiative, there is great promise there.

That gives you a very sharp focus on specific needs of manufacturing, developing those sorts of intellects and human infrastructure, workforce development, that will give us that cutting-edge technology.

I strongly support the NNMI initiative in the budget that the President had introduced last year. I think it shows us to be in an advanced sort of thinking and is giving manufacturing a shot in the arm. Our best days in manufacturing lie ahead. We need to invest so as to make that possible, and this budget does that.

So I thank you very much, and I look forward to many more discussions on the budget as we go forward in the ensuing weeks.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you, Mr. TONKO, for being such a leader on these issues.

As I was about to turn around to the Speaker and sign off, I realized I had left off a major piece of the infrastructure. We have a major drought in California, and we know that for California to be able to address this issue in the future, we are going to have to prepare by building reservoir capacity.

Well, I am not supposed to speak directly to anybody on the floor, but we are going to be putting forth a series of bills to build reservoirs in California. That is another critical piece of the infrastructure.

It may be the pipes. It may be the plumbing. It may be the sanitation system. But we desperately need to store water in California, not only in surface storage, but also to store that water in the underground aquifers.

If we do that, when the droughts which come occasionally to California, as they have in the past, we will be prepared to deal with them because we will have set aside the water that we needed.

Somebody asked me about this a few days ago, and they said: Well, why do we need to do that? Well, people will just consume it.

I said: Not if they listen and read Exodus in the Bible. It is there—7 years of good, 7 years of bad. You had better put it aside during the 7 years of good.

So that is what we intend to do. We will be introducing legislation later this week on building one of the major reservoirs in California.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will look to you and say that I look forward to working with you on these projects, and I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of official business.

Ms. JACKSON LEE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of official business.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and March 5.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 41 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, March 5, 2014, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4869. A letter from the Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting the semiannual report on the activities of the Office of Inspector General for the period April 1, 2013 to September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Financial Services.

4870. A letter from the Director, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the first annual report for Minority Depository Institutions Annual Report; to the Committee on Financial Services.

4871. A letter from the Chair, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the Commission's 2012 Annual Report of the Securities Investor Protection Corporation; to the Committee on Financial Services.

4872. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy, transmitting Third Report to Congress, January 2014, Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Activities, Progress, and Plans: September 2010 to August 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4873. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Colorado; Construction Permit Program Fee Increases; Construction Permit Regulation of PM2.5; Regulation 3 [EPA-R08-OAR-2013-0552; FRL-9903-94-Region 8] received February 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4874. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Indiana; Allen, Greene, Vanderburgh, Warrick, and Vigo Counties; 1997 8-Hour Ozone Maintenance Plan Revision to Approved Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets [EPA-R05-OAR-2013-0414, EPA-R05-OAR-2013-0424, EPA-R05-OAR-2013-0425, EPA-R05-OAR-2013-0432; FRL-9906-50-Region 5] received February 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4875. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Colorado Second Ten-Year PM10 Maintenance Plan for Telluride [EPA-R08-OAR-2011-0833; FRL-9906-35-Region 8] received February 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4876. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4877. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4878. A letter from the Chair, Merit Systems Protection Board, transmitting a report entitled, ''Evaluating Job Applicants: The Role of Training and Experience in Hiring''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4879. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program Report for Fiscal Year 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 7201(e); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4880. A letter from the Acting Commissioner, Social Security Administration, transmitting the semiannual report on the activities of the Office of Inspector General for the period April 1, 2013 through September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4881. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting a recommendation modifying the authorized total project cost of the

Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers Project; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4882. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Service's final rule — Update for Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates [Notice 2014-13] received February 24, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4883. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Applicable Federal Rates — March 2014 (Rev. Rul. 2014-8) received February 24, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4884. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Safe Harbor for Disregarded Entities Under Section 108 (Rev. Proc. 2014-20) received February 24, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4885. A letter from the Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for WTO and Multilateral Affairs, Office of the United States Trade Representative, transmitting the Administration's Annual Report on Subsidies Enforcement, pursuant to the Statement of Administrative Action of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4886. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Extension of Expiration Dates for Several Body System Listings [Docket No.: SSA-2013-0041] (RIN: 0960-AH61) received February 20, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4887. A letter from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, transmitting a letter regarding the selection of the next Director of Legislative Affairs; to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select).

4888. A letter from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, transmitting a letter regarding a new research program; to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select).

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 3189. A bill to prohibit the conditioning of any permit, lease, or other use agreement on the transfer, relinquishment, or other impairment of any water right to the United States by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture; with amendments (Rept. 113–372, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BURGESS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 497. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3826) to provide direction to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the establishment of standards for emissions of any greenhouse gas from fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4118) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to delay the implementation of the penalty for failure to comply with the indiviAal health insurance mandate (Rept. 113–373). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. REICHERT (for himself, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. GOSAR, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, and Mr. REED):

H.R. 4137. A bill to prohibit assistance provided under the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families from being accessed through the use of an electronic benefit transfer card at any store that offers marijuana for sale; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GOWDY (for himself, Mr. ISSA, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. FORBES, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. LABRADOR, and Mr. BACHUS):

H.R. 4138. A bill to protect the separation of powers in the Constitution of the United States by ensuring that the President takes care that the laws be faithfully executed, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TURNER (for himself, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. OLSON, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Ms. JENKINS, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. DENT, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. MARINO, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, and Mr. REICHERT):

H.R. 4139. A bill to promote United States economic growth and job creation and strengthen strategic partnerships with United States allies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD (for herself and Ms. BROWNLEY of California):

H.R. 4140. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide per diem payments to eligible entities for furnishing care to dependents of certain homeless veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CRENSHAW (for himself, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. YOHO, and Mr. MICA):

H.R. 4141. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into enhanced-use leases for excess property of the National Cemetery Administration that is unsuitable for burial purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. GOSAR (for himself, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. JONES, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee):

H.R. 4142. A bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to prohibit the use of benefits to purchase marijuana products, to amend part A of title IV of the Social Security Act to prohibit assistance provided under the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families from being accessed through the use of an electronic benefit transfer card at any store that offers marijuana for sale, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. GRANGER (for herself, Ms. BASS, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. OLSON, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. WOLF, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. COOPER, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. DOGGETT, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. COHEN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. NUNNELEE, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. FORBES, and Mr. MURPHY of Florida):

H.R. 4143. A bill to realign structures and reallocate resources in the Federal Government, in keeping with the core American belief that families are the best protection for children and the bedrock of any society, to bolster United States diplomacy and assistance targeted at ensuring that every child can grow up in a permanent, safe, nurturing, and loving family, and to strengthen intercountry adoption to the United States and around the world and ensure that it becomes a viable and fully developed option for providing families for children in need, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GRIMM (for himself, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. NUNNELEE, and Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York):

H.R. 4144. A bill to amend the provisions of title 46, United States Code, related to the Board of Visitors to the United States Merchant Marine Academy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. ISRAEL (for himself, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Ms. MENG):

H.R. 4145. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the dependent care credit to take into account expenses for care of parents and grandparents who do not live with the taxpayer; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PAULSEN:

H.R. 4146. A bill to amend the Low-Income Housing Preservation and Resident Homeownership Act of 1990; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. TAKANO:

H.R. 4147. A bill to direct the Chief Information Officer of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Deputy Under Secretary of Veterans Affairs for Economic Opportunity to submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of representatives a report regarding the information technology of the Department that is used in administering the educational benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON OF TEXAS (for himself, Mr. COLE, and Mr. BECERRA):

H.J. Res. 111. A joint resolution providing for the reappointment of John W. McCarter as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Ms. MOORE (for herself, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Ms. LEE of California):

H. Res. 498. A resolution expressing support for designation of the week of March 2, 2014, through March 8, 2014, as ''School Social Work Week''; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. REICHERT:

H.R. 4137.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, to ''provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States.''

By Mr. GOWDY:

H.R. 4138.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this legislation is based is found in Article I, Section 8, Clause 9; Article III, Section 1; and Article III, Section 2, Clause 2 of the Constitution, which grant Congress authority over federal courts. In addition, each House of Congress may determine the rules of its proceedings under Article I, Section 5, Clause 2.

By Mr. TURNER:

H.R. 4139.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution: The Congress shall have Power . . . To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD:

H.R. 4140.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 8, ''Congress shall have Power To Make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.''

By Mr. CRENSHAW:

H.R. 4141.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. GOSAR:

H.R. 4142.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This legislation is constitutionally appropriate pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 8 (the Spending Clause).

The Supreme Court, in South Dakota v. Dole (1987), reasoned that conditions and limitations on funds were constitutional and within the power of Congress under the Spending Clause.

Thus, conditioning receipt of federal funds in order to direct appropriate spending goals and purposes are constitutionally permissible. As long as the spending is on ''the general welfare'' (i.e. national in scope) and the condition is clear, and related to the program being funded, the limitation is constitutional.

By Ms. GRANGER:

H.R. 4143.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution that the Congress shall have power to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

By Mr. GRIMM:

H.R. 4144.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3,

By Mr. ISRAEL:

H.R. 4145.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. PAULSEN:

H.R. 4146.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. TAKANO:

H.R. 4147.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.J. Res. 111.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 17, giving Congress exclusive jurisdiction over the District of Columbia. That clause was cited as the authority for the government's ability to accept the original Smithson donation and the creation of the Smithsonian Institution via the Act of August 10, 1846.

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18, the Necessary and Proper clause, which provides the power to enact legislation necessary to effectuate one of the earlier enumerated powers, such as the authority granted in Clause 17 above.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 32: Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 118: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.

H.R. 279: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 411: Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.R. 445: Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 460: Mr. BARLETTA.

H.R. 479: Mr. VARGAS.

H.R. 494: Mr. CLAY.

H.R. 543: Mr. ISSA, Mr. FATTAH, and Mr. RICHMOND.

H.R. 597: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

H.R. 627: Mr. GARCIA.

H.R. 647: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 702: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 755: Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. STEWART, Mr. ROONEY, Mr. HOLDING, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mrs. WALORSKI, and Mr. WOLF.

H.R. 792: Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. MARCHANT, and Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 822: Ms. FUDGE and Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 867: Mr. WITTMAN.

H.R. 938: Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. PETERSON, and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 1015: Mrs. CAPPS.

H.R. 1179: Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 1225: Mr. COLE.

H.R. 1239: Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 1249: Mr. SCALISE.

H.R. 1250: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama and Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 1313: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.

H.R. 1318: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1354: Mr. MICA, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. BARBER, and Ms. BROWN of Florida.

H.R. 1500: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 1505: Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 1518: Mrs. BACHMANN.

H.R. 1573: Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. CONNOLLY, and Mr. BERA of California.

H.R. 1599: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK and Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 1616: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1726: Mr. YODER.

H.R. 1750: Mr. KING of New York and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

H.R. 1798: Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 1812: Mr. MCKEON.

H.R. 1915: Mr. MAFFEI, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, and Mr. PIERLUISI.

H.R. 1975: Mr. ENYART, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. BARBER, and Ms. BORDALLO.

H.R. 2012: Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 2028: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 2053: Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 2079: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 2143: Mr. HARRIS.

H.R. 2291: Mrs. LOWEY, Ms. MENG, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. MAFFEI, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 2324: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 2364: Mr. RUIZ.

H.R. 2413: Mr. BROUN of Georgia.

H.R. 2452: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 2468: Mr. GIBSON, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. TIERNEY, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. KUSTER, and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H.R. 2479: Mr. RUIZ, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Ms. ESTY.

H.R. 2500: Mr. LANCE, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, and Mr. FLORES.

H.R. 2548: Mr. DENT, Ms. ESTY, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. KILMER, Mr. MEADOWS, and Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 2575: Mr. LATHAM.

H.R. 2791: Mr. HANNA.

H.R. 2847: Mr. COHEN and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 2882: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 2917: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 2932: Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. COSTA, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. FORBES, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. MARINO, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. HARRIS, Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. VARGAS, and Mr. WOLF.

H.R. 2939: Mrs. BACHMANN, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Ms. ESTY, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. MORAN, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. CHAFFETZ, and

H.R. 2939: Mr. KLINE.

H.R. 2945: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 2996: Mrs. BLACK.

H.R. 3040: Mr. PETERS of California and Mrs. CAPPS.

H.R. 3077: Mr. GERLACH and Mr. MCCLINTOCK.

H.R. 3116: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 3240: Mr. AMODEI and Mr. RUIZ.

H.R. 3303: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H.R. 3330: Mr. FATTAH.

H.R. 3361: Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. MARCHANT, and Mr. GARDNER.
H.R. 3374: Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 3384: Mr. COTTON.
H.R. 3461: Ms. PINGREE of Maine and Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
H.R. 3482: Mr. GERLACH.
H.R. 3485: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.
H.R. 3505: Mr. COFFMAN and Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 3529: Mr. LONG, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
H.R. 3530: Mr. CONAWAY and Mr. WILLIAMS.
H.R. 3537: Ms. BASS.
H.R. 3548: Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 3571: Ms. ESTY and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 3576: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 3635: Mr. CAMP.
H.R. 3641: Mr. GUTHRIE.
H.R. 3658: Mr. COBLE, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. CAMP.
H.R. 3670: Ms. ESHOO and Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 3708: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana and Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 3723: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
H.R. 3740: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 3747: Mr. BARLETTA.
H.R. 3775: Mr. GUTHRIE.
H.R. 3833: Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 3854: Mr. DENT.
H.R. 3864: Mr. YOUNG of Indiana and Mr. REED.
H.R. 3877: Mrs. BEATTY and Mr. HANNA.
H.R. 3930: Mr. GIBBS, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. COBLE, Mr. MICA, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, and Mr. TIPTON.
H.R. 3956: Mr. ENYART.
H.R. 3991: Mr. RAHALL.
H.R. 3997: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico and Mr. OWENS.
H.R. 4006: Mr. BRIDENSTINE.
H.R. 4012: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.
H.R. 4016: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 4031: Mr. BRIDENSTINE and Mr. GUTHRIE.
H.R. 4035: Mr. WITTMAN.
H.R. 4041: Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 4058: Mr. REED and Mr. SCHOCK.
H.R. 4075: Ms. NORTON and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 4076: Mr. HUDSON, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. ROKITA, and Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.
H.R. 4079: Mr. GERLACH.
H.R. 4091: Mr. NUGENT and Mr. FARENTHOLD.
H.R. 4092: Mr. FOSTER and Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 4093: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 4094: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 4118: Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, and Mr. KLINE.
H.R. 4120: Mr. MORAN.
H.R. 4121: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 4128: Ms. KUSTER.
H.J. Res. 25: Mr. HECK of Washington.
H.J. Res. 110: Mr. MULLIN.
H. Con. Res. 78: Mr. COHEN.
H. Con. Res. 86: Mr. ENYART, Mr. Rodney Davis of Illinois, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H. Res. 136: Mr. FOSTER.
H. Res. 283: Mr. COHEN.
H. Res. 456: Mr. POLIS, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. LATHAM, and Mrs. CAPITO.
H. Res. 476: Mr. GOODLATTE.
H. Res. 488: Mr. MICA, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. PIERLUISI.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. HASTINGS OF WASHINGTON

The amendment filed to the Committee Print for H.R. 2824 by me does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of House rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. DAVE CAMP

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Ways and Means in H.R. 4118, ''Suspending the Individual Mandate Penalty Law Equals Fairness Act,'' do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives.

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Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Pastor Dave Weigley, President of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in the Mid-Atlantic States.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, creator and maker of all, who sits enthroned above the earth, and in whom we live, move and have our being, we praise You from whom all blessings flow. We thank You for Your sustaining power, for peace, for the freedoms we enjoy. We ask Your blessings on our great Nation, insightful leaders and dedicated lawmakers.

Establish their steps and give them discernment and courage to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly. Strengthen those who need to be uplifted, who are downcast, who need the compassionate touch of a brother's or sister's hand. Above all, may Your kingdom come, may Your will be done, and may we readily incline our ears to Your call today. This we pray in Your holy and righteous Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED—Resumed

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 309, S. 1086.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN.) The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1086) to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will be in a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

There will be no rollcall votes today because of the inclement weather we have had the last 3 or 4 days. The next rollcall vote will be tomorrow at 11:45 a.m.

BENEFITTING THE WEALTHY

Charles and David Koch are shrewd businessmen. Their wealth is nearly unparalleled, not only in America but in the world. The brothers inherited a small oil company. They inherited this company from their dad. They built it into a multinational corporation. It refines oil, makes carpets, manufactures fertilizers and chemicals, makes paper products, extracts minerals, produces glass, owns a cattle ranch, and lots of stuff.

Like most shrewd businessmen, the oil baron Koch brothers are very good at protecting and growing their prodigious future and their prodigious fortune. There is nothing un-American about that. But what is un-American is when shadowy billionaires pour unlimited money into our democracy to rig the system, to benefit themselves and the wealthiest 1 percent.

I believe in an America where economic opportunity is open to all. Based on their actions and policies they promote, the Koch brothers seem to believe in an America where the system is rigged to benefit the very wealthy. Based on Senate Republicans' ardent defense of the Koch brothers and the fact that they advocate for many of the same policies as the Koch brothers, it seems my Republican colleagues also believe in a system that benefits billionaires at the expense of the middle class.

The Koch brothers are willing to invest billions to buy that America. They are investing billions to buy that America. In 2010 the Supreme Court opened the flood gates of corporate money into electoral politics. That was with the Citizens United decision. Since mega donors such as Charles and David Koch can launder their huge contributions using shadowy shell groups and so-called nonprofits, it is difficult to tell exactly how much they have invested so far.

Investigative reporting done by some of the most respected news outlets in the country has revealed that the Koch brothers funnel money through a web of investor groups and advocacy organizations that are immune from disclosure rules, such as the Club for Growth, Heritage Action, the NRA, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. We may never know how much money the Koch brothers are spending to rig the system, to rig the system for themselves.

But we do know their investments have paid off already. In November 2010, the petroleum industry walked right through the door the Supreme Court had opened and spent hundreds of millions of dollars to elect a Republican majority to the House of Representatives. That Republican majority has effectively shut down any hope of passing legislation to limit the pollution that has caused climate change.

That Republican majority is, in fact, working to gut the most important safeguards to keep cancer-causing toxins and pollution that cause sickness and death out of the air we breathe and the water we drink. Without those safeguards, the Koch brothers would pass on the higher health care costs to

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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middle-class Americans while padding their own pocketbooks.

So the Koch brothers are already seeing a return on their 2010 investment in a Republican House of Representatives that does what they want done. But they certainly have not stopped there. The Koch-backed Americans for Prosperity alone spent $400 million in misleading attack ads last election cycle.

If you have seen an ad recently maligning the Affordable Care Act or ObamaCare, chances are, significantly, that these ads are from the Koch brothers or one of the shadow groups paid for by the Koch brothers. Koch-backed groups have spent a vast sum trying to elect Republican Senate candidates this year, a sum that dwarfs even the National Republican Senatorial Committee's own spending.

The Koch brothers and other moneyed interests are influencing the political process for their own benefit in a way not seen for generations. Republican Senators have come to the floor to defend the Koch brothers attempts to buy our democracy. Once again, Republicans are all in to protect their billionaire friends.

Not only have Senate Republicans come to the floor to defend the Koch brothers personally, they have again and again defended the Koch brothers' radical agenda—and it is radical, at least from a middle-class perspective.

Senate Republicans have opened so many different avenues to oppose closing a single tax loophole. Senate Republicans have opposed closing even a loophole for these oil companies or corporations that ship jobs overseas. This benefits the Koch brothers. Senate Republicans have opposed asking billionaires to pay the same higher tax rate as middle-class tax families, as illustrated by Warren Buffett.

Senate Republicans have opposed environmental and workplace safety standards that might cause the Koch brothers or their corporate donors a few extra dimes—a few extra dollars maybe. The Koch brothers are returning the favor with huge donations to Republican Senate candidates, either directly or indirectly.

Senate Republicans are addicted to Koch. In fact, Senate Republicans hardly need the NRSC any more, which for decade after decade was the main funding tool for the Republican Senate. Not any longer; the Koch brothers take care of that.

Aside from that, the NRSC cannot hide its donors' identities like the Koch brothers-funded groups can hide their donors' identities. Senate Republicans call this freewheeling spending by anonymous donors nothing more than ''free speech.'' Senate Republicans say that whoever has the most money gets the most free speech. But that is not what America's Founding Fathers said. They did not mean that by free speech. The Founders believed in a democracy where every American had a voice and a vote.

This discussion, this fight, is not just about health care or even about a few hundred million dollars in disingenuous ads. This is about two very wealthy brothers who intend to buy their own Congress, a Congress beholden to the money and bound to enact their radical philosophy. Witness this: Senators beholden to wealthy special interests; Republican senators rush to the floor to defend the Kochs whenever I say something negative about the brothers or their radical agenda.

By the way, the words ''radical agenda'' are not my words. Charles Koch proudly told Brian Doherty, an editor of the magazine ''Reason,'' about his self-described—his quote—''radical philosophy'' in 2007. These are the same brothers who have lobbied against the recognition of formaldehyde as a cancer-causing carcinogen, because it might be bad for their business.

These are the same brothers whose Koch Industries ranks near the top of the list of America's worst toxic air polluters. Those are the same brothers whose company, according to a Bloomberg investigation, paid bribes and kickbacks to win contracts in Africa, India, and the Middle East.

These are the same brothers who, according to the same report, used foreign subsidiaries to sell millions of dollars of equipment to Iran, a state sponsor of terrorism. Let's make sure we understand that. I may not have said it quite right. These are the same brothers who, according to the same report, used foreign subsidiaries to sell millions of dollars of equipment to Iran, a state sponsor of terrorism. We all know that.

The Koch brothers already believe they can play by a different set of rules. Think about how an America rigged by the Koch brothers would look. The Koch brothers do not care about creating a strong public education system in America. The Koch brothers do not care about maintaining the strong safety net of Medicare and Social Security. The Koch brothers do not care about the guarantee of affordable, quality health insurance for every American.

That is obvious from the misleading ads they have paid for all over the country. Why? Because the Koch brothers can afford to buy all of those benefits and more for themselves and their families. Their extreme vision for America means abolishing Social Security and Medicare. Their extreme vision for America means eliminating minimum wage laws. Their extreme vision for America means putting insurance companies back in charge of your health care and denying coverage for preexisting conditions. That is the way it used to be.

I guess that is what they want, running all of these ads. Their extreme vision for America means stripping tens of millions of people of the benefits in the Affordable Care Act today. Their extreme vision for America means allowing the gap between the wages women and men earn for the same work to keep growing. Their extreme vision for America means giving giant corporations the unfettered right to dump toxins in our rivers and streams, on our mountains and our valleys, and to give them even more tax breaks while they destroy our environment.

We Democrats have a different vision. Democrats believe the economy is strongest when the middle class is vibrant and growing. Democrats believe world class education leads to world class work. This work is one where people are ready to take on any challenge. Right now there are at least three people for every job available. Democrats believe in an even playing field with higher wages, affordable health care, and a secure retirement for every American so that every American can have a shot at success.

I welcome a debate over these competing visions. Average Americans share our vision for a country whose success is built on a strong middle class. The Koch brothers know Americans share our vision for a country where success is built on a strong middle class. That is why, rather than having an honest and fair debate, they are pouring hundreds of millions of dollars into a massive campaign of deception. They manufacture stories. They make up facts. They are angry that I am calling attention to their campaign of distortion and deceit.

I am not oblivious that my comments about the Koch brothers have caused some controversy. Anyone who has turned on FOX News knows that I have gotten under their skin. But I will continue to shine a light on their subversion of democracy.

When I hear my Republican colleagues defending the Koch brothers as they have, I recall the words of Adlai Stevenson:

> I have been thinking that I would make a proposition to my Republican friends . . . that if they will stop telling lies about the Democrats, we will stop telling the truth about them.

As long as the Koch brothers continue to spend hundreds of millions of dollars buying elections, I will continue to do all I can to expose their intentions.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. I noted with interest that the majority leader was hammering the Koch brothers again today, and I wondered why he left out billionaire Tom Steyer, who plans to spend as much as $100 million pushing the issue of climate change in the 2014 election and ''appears primed to rival the deep-pocketed and conservative Koch brothers,'' according to the New York Times. The truth is that these American citizens have a constitutional right to participate in the political process.

It strikes me as curious that if we are going to demonize people for exercising their constitutional rights to go

out, speak, and participate in the political process, we would just pick out the people who are opposed to us and leave out the people who are in favor of us. The truth is that there are many wealthy Americans who feel deeply about the country, who are committed to one side or the other, and who are trying to have an impact on the country—as many on the left as on the right.

So we ought not to leave out Tom Steyer. I believe he also has a brother, who is also a billionaire, who has similar views and will probably try to impact the fall's election in one way or another beneficial to the things he advocates.

THE BUDGET

The release of a President's budget is usually a pretty big deal, but President Obama's latest budget, released only this morning, hasn't even ginned up much excitement. Folks just aren't taking it very seriously because it is not a very serious document.

First, it could probably never even pass the Democratic-led Senate, and in some sense that is the point. Rather than put together a constructive blueprint that the two parties could use as a jumping-off point to get our economy moving and our fiscal house in order, the President has once again opted for the political stunt—for a budget that is more about firing up the base in an election year than about solving the Nation's biggest and most persistent long-term challenges.

It would increase taxes by well over $1 trillion in the worst economic slowdown nearly anyone can remember. It would explode spending by $790 billion, forcing us to borrow more money from places such as China. As I indicated, it would do almost nothing to address the most serious threats facing our children's future, and it doesn't even come close to balancing this year. No wonder the President thought the left would love it.

But this is my question for the President: What about the middle class? What is in it for them? It seems as though the President has just about given up on helping folks who are in the middle, folks who feel as if Washington doesn't take their concerns and anxieties into consideration anymore. What hope is he giving them that their medical bills won't be as high, that their wages will start going up instead of down? What is in this budget for them except for this nagging feeling that they will just keep getting squeezed?

The President is well into his sixth year of trying to fix this economy, his sixth year of trying to tax, spend, and regulate our way to prosperity—just as his ideology demands. But this much has to be clear by now: This doesn't work. Since 2009 the government has spent almost $18 trillion. Yet millions of middle-class Americans continue to suffer, whether in the unemployment line or in jobs that barely allow them to get by.

It is time the President realized that doubling down on the same failed policies is simply not going to work. Yet that is just what this budget proposes to do. We do not need any more election-year gimmicks. What is needed is a new approach, a positive strategy that focuses on helping the middle class instead of appeasing the far left.

President Obama still has 2 years in his Presidency. It is not too late for him to try to make a positive difference for folks struggling to pay their bills, but he has to let go of the left and reach to the middle. He has to decide that bipartisan solutions are worth fighting for. If he does he is going to find significant support on this side of the aisle. We want to work with him to get important legislation done for our country. We always have. We are eager to expand opportunity for the middle class and to build more ladders of opportunity for those who aspire to it. We are eager to enact policies that can create American jobs—approving things such as the Keystone Pipeline, medical device tax repeal, and important new trade legislation, just to name a few we could do together. We are eager to find ways to control spending and put the debt on a path to elimination. We are eager to reform the regulatory state so that the rules coming out of Washington actually work for people other than the bureaucratic class who writes them.

There are bipartisan solutions to be had on these types of issues if only the President could put the politics aside for a few minutes and actually work with us, really work with us, because the kind of unserious budget he put out today is just the type of silly politicking we need to get past. After all, why would we want a budget that grows the Federal Government while the middle class continues to shrink? Washington is doing just fine in the ObamaCare economy, but real Americans deserve a lot better. We can give it to them if we work together.

What I am saying is this: Mr. President, you have 2 years remaining in office. Work with us to make them count.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for debate only, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Connecticut.

POLITICAL SPENDING

Mr. MURPHY. First, I associate myself with the remarks of the majority leader. I certainly understand the concerns of those on the Republican side about the individual who has proposed to spend a certain amount of money supporting the global warming cause, but it pales in comparison to the money that has already been spent by the Koch brothers, who have poured hundreds of millions of dollars and will continue to pour hundreds of millions of dollars into these races, completely dwarfing any amount of money that is spent on the other side.

UKRAINE

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I am on the floor to talk about the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. I am pleased to have Senator MCCAIN on the floor because it is very hard to describe the sensation both he and I felt at the end of the last year when we got the chance to travel to the Maidan—Independence Square—in Kiev and speak to about 1 million people. It is even harder to describe the sensation of hearing that group of people yelling back to us in unison:

Thank you, U.S.A. Thank you, U.S.A.

But that was the reality we were able to experience.

It is important to note that Senator MCCAIN and I didn't go to the Maidan that day to advocate for President Yanukovych's removal even though the end of that process resulted in that fact. In actuality we spent 2 hours that night meeting with Yanukovych, pleading with him to reverse course on his decision to abandon plans to join the EU so that he could win back the support of the hundreds of thousands of people who had gathered on that square to support our European integration and domestic political reforms. But President Yanukovych didn't listen, and instead he lost his legitimacy as a ruler when he turned his security service on his own people, resulting in the murder of over 100 Ukrainians who simply wanted to compel their leader to follow the wishes of the Ukrainian people.

I was proud to author a resolution that passed unanimously in this body that declared our support for the ability of Ukrainians to peacefully air their grievances against their government and to oppose the use of force against them. Then, I was equally proud to join Senator MCCAIN and some others in a bipartisan call for sanctions against Yanukovych when he began his murderous crusade against the protesters. I was even prouder of President Obama, who through the State Department sent a clear, unwavering message to the Ukrainian people that the United States stood with them in their desire to see a better future for Ukraine, aligned with Europe and the West.

This strong bipartisan approach here in America to the Maidan movement helped the people of Ukraine as they charted their own path toward a new government. We didn't dictate the

terms of Ukraine's future; we simply supported the right of the people to determine it for themselves.

But now, despite the success of the Maidan, the crisis in Ukraine has changed its face. It hasn't dissipated. And today Secretary Kerry was greeted in Kiev by Ukrainians pleading for the continued support of the United States.

Having been so clear-voiced in our support of the Ukrainian people thus far since the protests began last November, now is the moment when Democrats and Republicans should stand united in this Congress so that years from now, when a group assembles in Kiev marking the anniversary of this grave crisis, they will celebrate Ukraine's political sovereignty and economic rebirth with more chants of thanks to the United States.

In what shape should this support come?

First, we need to stand together in the next week to deliver serious financial assistance to a Ukrainian economy that is weak and is growing weaker as this crisis persists. A $1 billion aid package is a good start, but our real work must happen within the structures of the IMF, which can provide potentially tens of billions of dollars necessary to fully right the Ukrainian economic ship. While Ukraine does need to undergo economic and budget reforms from within, I would caution the IMF to be gentle in the timing of the conditions applied to this aid. Difficult steps need to be undertaken to right-size gas prices and trim budget deficits, but Ukraine should be given a long enough lease so that these necessary reforms don't strangle a nation today dealing with threats to its very existence.

Second, Crimea. Russia has invaded Ukraine, make no mistake. They have done so in violation of the United Nations charter and the very accord they signed in 1994 guaranteeing Crimea's territorial security. No doubt Vladimir Putin was sore at losing his erstwhile ally in the Ukrainian President's office. No doubt he didn't like the fact that the United States voiced its strong support for the right of a sovereign Ukraine to make independent decisions about its future partnerships. No doubt he is infuriated that the Ukrainian people are now on their way to getting their way. But this is not a schoolyard. You don't get to push weaker kids around just because you don't like them. This is the 21st century.

The reason we belong to organizations such as the United Nations or the reason we negotiate treaties such as the Budapest memorandum is because now we understand, after centuries of European war, how destabilizing this kind of behavior is.

The irony for Russia, of course, is that this invasion demonstrably weakens, not strengthens, their nation's position in the world. Let's say for argument's sake that the end result of this crisis is a Crimea that is more closely aligned with Russia than with Ukraine. What does that accomplish for Russia? Well, it will have won the occupation of 2 million Ukrainians while the majority of the other 43 million continue to orient themselves permanently toward the European Union.

If the United States and Europe make good on sanctions threats, which I hope we will, it will devastate the Russian economy, leaving millions of Russians out of work and adding political instability to Putin's own land at a time when he really can't afford much more instability, and it will make Russia an international pariah, shunned by the industrialized nations that help form the future path of global, political, and economic values.

Given this reality, why did Putin do it? He didn't do it to protect Russians in Ukraine because the only threat to their safety is due to the military crisis of Russia's own making. He did it because, like the schoolyard bully, he doesn't see past his own nose. He believes that he wins by temporarily flexing his muscles and by capturing the world's attention. He doesn't look to the long-term, potentially dire consequences to his own political standing and to his own people. He pulls punches because it feels good today no matter how bad it will hurt tomorrow.

But that being said, no matter the irrationality of Moscow's behavior, we need to make sure in the case that Russia does not correct its mistake, and correct it soon, the consequences do hurt. I believe Congress should authorize broad authority for President Obama to enact strong sanctions on Russia through penalties to its banks, its oil companies, and its political and economic elite. I believe the President should only be allowed to use this authority in the case that this illegal incursion into Ukraine continues and that we should give Moscow the opportunity to reverse course or join with the international community to address their concerns about the safety of Russian citizens in Ukraine.

Let's give Russia a chance to make this better and deliver a clear message of the consequences if they don't. This, of course, can't happen without the support of our European allies. As chairman of the Foreign Relations Subcommittee on European Affairs, I will be on the phone this week with European Parliamentarians urging them to join us in proposing new sanctions on the Russian economy.

I know there is hesitance in Europe due to the integration of Russia into the European economies, but this crisis should, frankly, matter more to Europe than it matters to us. Five years ago it was a laughable proposition that Russia would invade Ukraine, but it is happening now. It may be unthinkable today that Russia, in 5 years, is going to move on a NATO ally, but if this aggression goes unchecked, then the future can be very perilous, even for our friends in Europe.

Finally, a word on the politics of this crisis. I have listened to some of my good friends on the Republican side try to score political points in connection with the Russian move on Crimea, trying to paint this somehow as Obama's fault. This is a ridiculous contention. Putin marched into Georgia in 2008 under a Republican President, who many of my Republican colleagues considered to be strong on foreign policy, and now he is doing it with a Democrat in office. President Obama is considering steps in response that seemingly weren't even considered in 2008.

What has me feeling even more suspect of the criticisms of President Obama is there doesn't seem to be any real difference between what the Republicans want the President to do and what he is actually doing. It is easy to say it is Obama's fault, but history tells us otherwise, and these political attacks mask the fortunate fact that there is pretty solid bipartisan agreement on what to do next.

Ukraine can remain whole and free and it can stay on a path to join Europe. When that day emerges from the smoke and the fire of the crisis, if we play our cards right, then they will have America and our European allies to thank, in part, for that new day.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

UKRAINE

Mr. McCAIN. I thank my colleague from Connecticut for his thoughtful remarks on events taking place and the tragedies taking place in Ukraine as we speak. I appreciate his commitment to trying to find a way through this very difficult situation.

The Senator is dead wrong when he says this is similar to Georgia. In fact, this Senator wanted to do a lot more than we did. In fact, we did a lot more. The fundamental problem, I say to my friend from Connecticut, is that this President does not understand Vladimir Putin. He does not understand his ambitions. He does not understand that Vladimir Putin is an old KGB colonel bent on restoration of the Russian empire. It was Vladimir Putin who said: The greatest catastrophe of the 20th century was the downfall of the Soviet Union.

The Senator from Connecticut should understand that. This President has never understood this. This President is the one who ridiculed Mitt Romney when Mitt Romney said our great enemy was Russia and its geopolitical threats. This President said the Cold War has been over for 20 years. This President believes the Cold War is over, but Vladimir Putin doesn't believe the Cold War is over.

When the President of the United States is overheard to say to Mr. Putin's puppet, Mr. Medvedev: Tell Vladimir that after I am reelected I will be more flexible.

Did you get that? The President said: Tell Vladimir after I am reelected I will be more flexible. This is the same

President who believed that somehow Vladimir Putin had anything but the ambitions which he is now realizing in Ukraine. In fact, I think it might be interesting for my colleagues to note that Vladimir Putin spoke to the press today and Vladimir Putin, among other things, during his answering questions from the press, said:

First of all, my assessment of what happened in Kiev and in Ukraine in general. There can only be one assessment: this was an anti-constitutional takeover, an armed seizure of power.

That was Vladimir Putin's view of what happened in Kiev as Yanukovych slaughtered, I believe, 82 innocent civilians as well as wounding hundreds.

Then he goes on to say:

I would like to stress that under that agreement Mr. Yanukovych actually handed over power.

Obviously, Yanukovych did not hand over power. He was driven from power by the good people who were tired of his corruption and were sick of his nepotism and his crony capitalism. Anybody who believes anything good about Mr. Yanukovych should see the pictures of the home he had and the dacha he was building that cost hundreds of millions of dollars—truly a man of the people.

President Putin went on to say:

The current acting president [of Ukraine] is definitely not legitimate. There is only one legitimate president, from a legal standpoint. . . . Yanukovych is the only undoubtedly legitimate President.

Then comes more interesting things. Vladimir Putin now says:

Now about financial aid to Crimea. As you know, we have decided to organize work in the Russian regions to aid Crimea, which has turned to us for humanitarian support. We will provide it, of course. I cannot say how much, when or how. The government is working on this by bringing together the regions bordering on Crimea by providing additional support to our regions so they can help the people in Crimea. We will do it, of course.

Regarding the deployment of troops, the use of armed forces, so far there is no need for it, but the possibility remains.

Let me repeat that. This is from today. Vladimir Putin said:

Regarding the deployment of troops, the use of armed forces, so far there is no need for it, but the possibility remains.

This is a return to the old Russian Soviet doublespeak which was absolute nonsense, but they said it anyway.

He goes on to say:

What is our biggest concern? We see the rampage of reactionary forces, nationalist and anti-Semitic forces going on in certain parts of Ukraine, including Kiev. . . . When we see this, we understand what worries the citizens of Ukraine, both Russian and Ukrainian, and the Russian-speaking population in the eastern and southern regions of Ukraine. It is this uncontrolled crime that worries them. Therefore, if we see such uncontrolled crime spreading to the eastern regions of the country—

We should pay careful attention to these words of Mr. Putin—

if we see such uncontrolled crime spreading to the eastern regions of the country, and if the people ask us for help, while we already have the official request from the legitimate President, we retain the right to use all available means to protect those people. We believe this would be absolutely legitimate.

Then he goes on to say, in answer to a question:

Thus the tension in Crimea that was linked to the possibility of using our Armed Forces simply died down and there was no need to use them.

I repeat:

Thus the tension in Crimea that was linked to the possibility of using our Armed Forces simply died down and there was no need to use them. The only something we had to do, and we did it, was to enhance the defense of our military facilities because they were constantly receiving threats and we were aware of the armed nationalists moving in.

Russia has well trained, well equipped now an additional 16,000 or more, and Vladimir Putin was worried about enhancing the defense of his military facilities because they were constantly receiving threats.

He goes on to say:

There is something I would like to stress, however. Obviously, what I am going to say now is not within my authority and we do not intend to interfere. However, we firmly believe all citizens of Ukraine, I repeat, wherever they live, should be given the same equal right to participate in the life of their country and determining its future.

My friends, we are seeing justification for intervention and serious intervention in eastern Ukraine. So the article goes on with further questions, and he goes on to take a shot at the United States saying:

Our partners, especially in the United States, always clearly formulate their own geopolitical and state interests and follow them with persistence. Then, using the principle ''You're either with us or against us'' they draw the whole world in. And those who do not join in get ''beaten'' until they do.

Then he goes on to say:

Our approach is different. We proceed from the conviction that we always act legitimately. I have personally—

I say to my colleagues, I am not making this up. This is what Vladimir Putin said—

I have always been an advocate of acting in compliance with international law. I would like to stress yet again that if we do make the decision, if I do decide to use the Armed Forces, this will be a legitimate decision in full compliance with both general norms of international law, since we have the appeal of the legitimate President, and with our commitments, which in this case coincide with our interest to protect the people with whom we have close historical cultural and economic ties. Protecting these people is in our national interests. This is a humanitarian mission. We do not intend to subjugate anyone or to dictate to anyone. However, we cannot remain indifferent if we see they are being persecuted, destroyed and humiliated.

Here is probably the most interesting part:

Question: Mr. President, a clarification, if I may. The people who were blocking the Ukrainian Army units in Crimea were wearing uniforms that strongly resembled the Russian Army uniform. Were those Russian soldiers, Russian military?

Vladimir Putin: Why don't you take a look at the post-Soviet states. There are many military uniforms there that are similar. You can go to a store and buy any kind of uniform.

Question: But were they Russian soldiers or not?

Vladimir Putin: Those were local self-defence units.

Question: How well trained are they? If we compare them to the self-defence units in Kiev . . .

Vladimir Putin: My dear colleague, look how well trained the people who operated in Kiev were. As we all know they were trained at special bases in neighboring states: in Lithuania, Poland and in Ukraine itself too. They were trained by instructors for extended periods. They were divided into dozens and hundreds, their actions were coordinated, they had good communication systems. It was all like clockwork. Did you see them in action? They looked very professional, like special forces. Why do you think those in Crimea should be any worse?

Question: In that case, can I specify: did we take part in training Crimea self-defence forces?

Vladimir Putin: No, we did not.

This is the same guy the President of the United States pushed the reset button for time and again. This is the same guy whom the President says we can work with—Vladimir Putin.

Then my colleague and former Member of this body on Friday—on Friday, as Putin's forces moved into Crimea, and it was very clear to anyone the Russians were moving in—Secretary of State John F. Kerry spoke Friday with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. This is a quote from Secretary Kerry.

We raised the issue of the airports, raised the issue of armored vehicles, raised the issue of personnel in various places. While we were told they are not engaging in any violation of the sovereignty, and do not intend to, I nevertheless made it clear that could be misinterpreted at this moment and that there are enough tensions that it is important for everybody to be extremely careful not to inflame the situation and not to send the wrong messages.

I am not making that up. So after 5 years of believing that somehow Vladimir Putin was anything but what he is, we are now paying the piper. The chickens are coming home to roost.

Do we have a military option? No. But we do have a number of other options.

I wish to read one other article that was in USA Today by Jonah Goldberg entitled ''Obama In Denial on Russia.''

I will not go through a lot of it, about student Obama, but here is some of the quote from the article:

In 1983, then-Columbia University student Obama penned a lengthy article for the school magazine placing the blame for U.S.-Soviet tensions largely on America's ''war mentality'' and the ''twisted logic'' of the Cold War. President Reagan's defense buildup, according to Obama, contributed to the ''silent spread of militarism'' and reflected our ''distorted national priorities'' rather than what should be our goal: a ''nuclear free world.''

That is what student Obama said. But the remarkable thing is 2 weeks ago in response to tensions in Ukraine, the President explained that:

Our approach . . . is not to see (events in Ukraine) as some Cold War chessboard in which we're in competition with Russia.

This is a horrible way to talk about the Cold War because it starts from the premise that it all was just a game conducted between two morally equivalent competitors.

Similar comments about Cold War rivalries and the like are commonplace of late, especially during the Sochi Olympics, when NBC commentators were desperate to portray the entire Soviet chapter as nothing more than a pivotal experience.

America surely made mistakes during the near half-century twilight struggle. The fact is there was a right side and a wrong side to that conflict and we were on the right side of it. The Soviet Union, of which Vladimir Putin was a part, murdered millions of its own people, stifled freedom in nearly every forum, enslaved whole nations, and actively tried to undermine democracy all around the world, including in the United States.

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

Mr. MCCAIN. I ask unanimous consent for 5 more minutes.

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

Mr. MCCAIN. President Putin, a former KGB agent, has said the collapse of the ''evil empire'' was ''the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century.'' This alone should have been a clue to this White House that misspelled reset buttons weren't going to cut it. But they were too stuck in the past to see it.

I could go on and on, including the ridicule some of us were subjected to when we pointed this out from time to time, including in 2008 when I said in a debate with then-candidate Obama: Watch Ukraine. Watch Ukraine. Putin will not give up Ukraine.

We need to have an economic aid package immediately, and I am glad our Secretary of State is over there with initial U.S. loan guarantees, joining the EU, and a longer substitute package through the International Monetary Fund. We have to stabilize the economy of Ukraine which is near collapse. Financial sanctions, freezing assets, visa bans, trade embargoes—all of those can be accomplished, particularly expansion of the Magnitsky act, so people who are responsible will not have bank accounts, they will not travel, they will not ever get a visa. They need to pay a penalty for orchestrating what is happening in Ukraine right now.

Obviously we should not go to the G–8 summit. He should be thrown out of the G–8. It should now be the G–7. They obviously have to suspend military-to-military engagements. We need to have a path—and a quick one—for both Moldova and Georgia to move into NATO. Both countries are occupied by Russian troops, Moldova in Transnistria and in Georgia at Kajian South Abkhazia, and quite often Russians keep moving the fence farther and farther into the sovereign territory of these countries. In an attempt to appease Mr. Putin, we abandoned missile defense systems in Poland and the Czech Republic. We need to reinstate those and move forward as quickly as possible.

There are a number of things the most powerful Nation in the world needs to do. I am not counting on our European friends. Already there have been statements by Angela Merkel and the leaking of a memorandum from the British Government. We may have to do a lot of these things by ourselves, because they are dependent on Russia for a lot of their energy supplies, and we have seen a significant recession in European leadership over the last 10 to 20 years. But we need to act, and we need to speak in favor of the people who are now being overtaken in Crimea by Vladimir Putin's army and military. I worry.

In conclusion, I say it is time we wake up about Vladimir Putin. It is time this administration gets real. It is also time for us to worry about what Vladimir Putin will do in eastern Ukraine on the pretext that somehow disorder and demonstrations might require Russian presence.

My friends, if we allow Mr. Putin to assert his authority over these areas because of Russian-speaking people, that message is not lost on Poland where there is a Russian population, on Romania, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, and Moldova. We are on the verge possibly of seeing a move to reassert the old Russian empire, which is Mr. Putin's lifelong ambition.

I have overstayed my time. I thank my colleague from Alabama.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I appreciate the opportunity to listen to Senator MCCAIN. I think facts have proven him right for many over many years of warning this country about how we have to conduct international relations in a realistic way.

I had the opportunity to be in Georgia and Ukraine about 3 years ago. In Georgia, we went to South Ossetia where the Russians had moved in, against European international law, and had set in. Last week or so, we were informed by the Prime Minister of Georgia they were building barbed wire fences along that border, digging in even deeper than they had before.

In Ukraine, we met with some of the democratic dissidents who were trying to hang on to democracy there. They had beaten Shevchenko, the fabulous lady who helped lead the Orange Revolution. She was worried about going to jail. I didn't think she would go to jail, but they put her in jail and kept her in jail for years on what EU and NATO officials have all said were bogus charges. They told us some of the democratic activists were somewhat depressed because Putin, with his intel background, was using the Russian intelligence services in Ukraine to buy up media and buy up television to propagandize the country. They were hurting, and they didn't know if they would be able to successfully resist. It was such a delight for me to see this basically nonviolent revolution in which the people stood up for their country. Now we see Mr. Putin did not accept the sovereignty, and he is going to try to utilize military force in a way which is stunning. I have to say, Crimea is far larger and more strategically significant than South Ossetia and Abkhazia, but it is the same actions.

I thank Senator MCCAIN for his leadership.

ADEGBILE NOMINATION

I will share a few thoughts on the nomination of Debo Adegbile to be the Assistant Attorney General of the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, a very important position.

There is no question he is a bright young lawyer, has a good resume. He spent 13 years with the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, one of the advocacy groups of the historic organization. They have been champions for advocacy and defense of civil rights and have done tremendous work over the years, and I have seen a lot of it. But they have also used the courts to advance political agendas which haven't always been accepted and have been seen to be improper.

While serving as the acting president and director-counsel of the Legal Defense Fund, Mr. Adegbile positioned himself at the center of many high-profile cases—cases in the news media, and issues he dealt with. Perhaps most notably as litigation director, he chose, without being asked or without being even needed, to participate in the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the country's most notorious killer of a police officer. Abu-Jamal was tried at trial and convicted of the murder of a young 25-year-old Philadelphia police officer, Daniel Faulkner. The evidence at trial proved that Abu-Jamal shot Officer Faulkner in the back, and then stood over him and shot him three more times before firing a final shot into Officer Faulkner's face. Immediately following the murder, he stated that he hoped the officer died.

As noted by Philadelphia District Attorney Seth Williams, in his letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee in opposition to this nomination, he said:

> Evidence at the trial established that while this was not some case of random street crime, Abu-Jamal was a supporter of the MOVE organization, an anarchist group that explicitly advocated violence against police.

This is the district attorney's summary of this case.

> Some members of this body have argued that Mr. Adegbile's choice to involve himself and his organization in this case is irrelevant because it is simply a case of a lawyer representing an unpopular client.

And lawyers do that. They are called upon to do that. I live in Monroe County, AL, the home of Atticus Finch,

Harper Lee, who wrote ''To Kill A Mockingbird.'' He was asked to defend an unpopular defendant in the setting of Macon, which is Monroeville, AL. He undertook and did his duty because he knew it was his duty.

But I will take a few moments to read from District Attorney Williams' letter to Chairman LEAHY and Ranking Member GRASSLEY which powerfully illustrates why this is not the same thing. We are talking about a lawyer's duty to take on unpopular clients and make sure every American who is charged with a crime is entitled to an adequate defense. The district attorney of this very large office goes on:

> Abu-Jamal made every effort to turn the trial into political theater. He repeatedly interrupted the proceedings, insulted the judge, and chanted the name of MOVE leader John ''Africa.'' During the appeals, his supporters attempted to intimidate the judge by massing in front of his home in a residential neighborhood. Worst of all, they have maintained a three-decade-long campaign of verbal abuse against Officer Faulkner's widow, Maureen, who simply wanted justice for her dead husband.

This is indisputable. I think no one denies it. The D.A. goes on to say:

> His lawyers . . . echoed these tactics in their legal maneuvers.

In other words, the lawyers defending him used the same tactics that the defendant did.

In other words, the lawyers defending him used the same tactics that the defendant did. They were not required to do that. Lawyers are officers of the court. They should never misrepresent anything in court or take a position contrary to plain law or misstate facts. Lawyers are not entitled to do that. So District Attorney Williams' letter goes on to say:

> Despite the overwhelming evidence of guilt, they have—

The defendant and the lawyers, he is saying here—

> —they have consistently attempted to turn reality on its head, arguing that Abu-Jamal was framed and that it was he, rather than Officer Faulkner, who was the victim of racism. The LDF perpetuated these allegations when they took over Abu-Jamal's case. Although Abu-Jamal's death sentence was eventually overturned on the basis of new procedural rules invented after his trial, his murder conviction has been upheld, and his lawyers' bogus racial claims have been consistently rejected in both state and federal court.

That is the D.A.'s continuing summation of it. He goes on to say:

> Aside from being patently false, moreover, these claims are personally insulting to me. As an African-American, I know all too well the grievous consequences of racial discrimination and prejudice. I also know that Abu-Jamal was convicted and sentenced because of the evidence, not because of his race; and I have continued to fight for the jury's verdict because it was the just result.

So I respect that opinion. I don't think he would be saying that if he didn't believe it. He goes on to say:

> Given all the laudable objectives of the NAACP, it is telling that Mr. Adegbile chose to devote his resources to this particular cause rather than the many legitimate battles that called for his formidable abilities.

I was a federal prosecutor for 15 years and attorney general of Alabama for 2 years. I am a firm believer in the essential integrity of the American criminal justice system. I have seen it too long. I have tried too many cases before a jury. I believe they do justice every time. But there are—in a place as large as Philadelphia, and in places as large as America and in any state in America, you have poor people, people who are uneducated, people who can be deprived of rights they didn't know they had. Errors by chance could occur in a trial. There are needs for groups like the NAACP, the Legal Defense Fund, and other groups to defend people who have been caught up in the system and unfairly treated. That is a legitimate thing. So what I hear the district attorney saying is: Why choose this one to be so active about? He has good lawyers. The case was on appeal. So he goes on to say:

> Of course, in our system even a radical cop-killer like Mumia Abu-Jamal is entitled to legal representation. That does not mean, however, that those lawyers who elect to arm him in his efforts are suitable to lead this nation's highest law enforcement offices. To select such a lawyer, among all those qualified for the position, speaks volumes to police officers and their families.

So he is saying: OK, you can do this. You can defend these cases. That is perfectly all right. You can pick that case out of all of them in the country and defend it, but you should not necessarily be promoted to this high position.

So this is not simply a case of a lawyer representing an unpopular client. It was a political cause. There was really no question about it.

What troubles me more than some of the other issues in the case is Mr. Adegbile's co-counsel, Christina Swarns, who actually worked for him. He was a supervising attorney. She explained the Legal Defense Fund motivation for getting involved in this case. Why? She explained it at a ''Free Mumia'' rally in 2011. This is what she said at that rally:

> It is absolutely my honor to represent Mumia Abu-Jamal. It is my pleasure, it is my honor to have that opportunity, and there is no question in my mind, there is no question in the mind of anyone at the Legal Defense Fund—

I suppose, surely, that includes the nominee—

> that the justice system has utterly and completely failed Mumia Abu-Jamal and in our view, that has everything to do with race and that is why the Legal Defense Fund is in this case . . . We are acutely aware that the injustices of the criminal justice system are inextricably bound up in race.

She says the Legal Defense Fund agreed with that. But the district attorney, Mr. Seth Williams, an African American himself, said the conviction had nothing to do with race but everything to do with the plain fact that he murdered a police officer, was observed, confessed and admitted it, and said he hoped he died, and the jury found that. A biracial jury convicted him.

So while that is just her opinion, that is her statement, and she said she was speaking for the Fund. I serve on the Judiciary Committee, and we asked Mr. Adegbile: What about this statement by Ms. Swarns, and do you agree with it? How do you explain it, and what do you have to say about it?

Did he say he didn't agree with it? Did he say she misspoke? Did he say, I wouldn't have used those words? Did he say it was inappropriate, I didn't know about it?

This is what he said:

> I do not know what Ms. Swarns had in mind when she made the comment.

That is not satisfactory to me. The question was a very serious one. I believe the comments by Ms. Swarns were inappropriate. They were false. They demeaned the integrity of the legal system of America improperly. As an officer of the court she had no right to do that. She really should have been disciplined, in my opinion. What did he say to the Judiciary Committee's written questions submitted to him? What does he say? All he said was: ''I do not know what Ms. Swarns had in mind when she made the comment.''

I think it is pretty clear what she had in mind. This is a radical view of criminal justice in America. It is very wrong. It is not correct. It is false. I am amazed that he would not at least take this opportunity now several years later to correct it.

In 2011 a Legal Defense Fund press release at the time that the nominee was leading the department declared:

> LDF seeks to sweep the grave injustices embodied in this case into the dust bin of history and, in so doing, give communities of color reason to believe that they can and will receive equal justice in Pennsylvania courtrooms.

So it is a direct attack on the integrity of the courtroom and the jury and the judge and the appellate courts and federal appellate courts in Pennsylvania. That is the official press release of the Legal Defense Fund.

I don't think there is any evidence that there was any grave injustice done. In fact, justice was plainly done in this case. So that same press release, former LDF director, John Payton, is quoted as saying:

> Abu-Jamal's conviction and death sentence are relics of a time and place that was notorious for police abuse and racial discrimination . . . unless and until courts acknowledge and correct these historic injustices, death sentences like Mr. Abu-Jamal's will invite continued skepticism of the criminal justice system by the African American community.

Mr. Adegbile has not rejected these statements. In fact, he is proud of his role in the case, testifying it demonstrates America's commitment to follow our procedural rules even in those hardest cases.

I just would say that a chief of the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington,

DC, holds an extremely important position. He is not a blind advocate for one vision of what some might call civil rights. I do not think it is a civil rights position these lawyers are taking. He is supposed to be a neutral observer. If a police officer violates the civil rights of someone under his custody, then he ought to be prosecuted, dismissed, and punished for it. But the Civil Rights Division leader is supposed to be somebody that everybody can trust, who people believe does not have an agenda, and who they believe is fair to all. So therein lies the rub.

Even someone who murders a police officer deserves legal representation. There is no doubt about that. But the Philadelphia District Attorney, Mr. Seth Williams, an African American said:

> That does not mean, however, that those lawyers who elect to arm him in his efforts are suitable to lead this nation's highest law enforcement offices. To select such a lawyer, among all those qualified for the position, speaks volumes to police officers and their families.

It speaks volumes to them that this individual, this nominee for the Department of Justice, would be perceived as someone who is just voluntarily, aggressively, and improperly, in my opinion, taking the side of someone who is tried for murdering a policeman.

So the Civil Rights Division must protect the civil rights of all Americans. It must not be used to further a political agenda of any special interest groups as too often has occurred in this administration, in my opinion. It must be a place where the rights of all Americans are protected, regardless of their race and political party.

We have seen racial prejudice in the past, and it does need to be stamped out, but I do not believe the President's nominee is qualified because I do not see the required degree of objectivity and balance that will be necessary, and I will oppose the nomination.

I don't like to oppose nominees. It is no fun. I am sure this nominee has done many good things in his life. But there are points in time when we just have to say that as a Senator, I cannot vote for a nominee I don't believe is going to be objective and fair in the conduct of that important office.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MANCHIN). The Senator from Missouri.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I want to talk for a few minutes today about health care and more inquiries I have from the people I work for in our State about health care. Like we always do, I followed up with them to verify that I understand their account, and they don't mind if I at least mention their first name and where they are from as we talk about these problems.

This morning I had a chance to speak to the American Federation of Hospitals about the challenges we face, and I mentioned the comment I made on the floor a few days ago, which was: If we were dealing with this health care debate today, in my view it would be a much different debate. Every Member of the House, every Member of the Senate, and almost every American who has been impacted in any way by the changes in health care understands this a whole lot better than we may have understood it 4 years ago.

I was in the House in 2009 and was leading our effort to come up with the alternatives that were clearly out there that I think we could have, and, frankly, should have pursued. But at that time it was clear a lot of Members had not really thought about this, and in many cases people who worked thought about it even less. We had a situation that, in many ways, was an accidental development at the end of World War II where most people in America who had insurance got their insurance at work. If the people at work liked the insurance they had, of course, among other things, they hoped they would be able to keep it. Hopefully many of them will, but clearly many of them won't.

The letters I have today are reflective of all kinds of challenges people are seeing. One of the things that was working very well in the almost 40 States that had it was the high-risk pool. The high-risk pool allowed people who had preexisting conditions a way to get insurance. They were in a pool that was pretty well defined. Not everybody with a preexisting condition had an ongoing cost. You might have a condition that was under control, you might have had a heart problem or cancer problem or another problem that stood in the way of your getting other insurance, but it didn't mean you had a lot of ongoing costs. It did mean the high-risk pool was a place you could go.

In our State, the premium for the people in the high-risk pool was 135 percent of what everybody else was paying. So you would take the average rate of what people were paying for insurance and add 35 percent to that.

Remember, these were people who everybody understood—including them—had a preexisting condition. They had a place to go. If the new plan would have reduced that 35 percent back to what everybody else was paying, that might have been a worthy goal, but that doesn't appear to be what has happened at all to the 4,000 people who left the Missouri high-risk pool when it ended because of the new law on December 31 of last year. There was a transition for some of them.

I have a letter from Bjorn of Kansas City. He said his wife was previously insured under the Missouri Health Insurance Pool for preexisting conditions. In her case she had a back condition. That was canceled in the middle of 2012, and she was put in another high-risk pool that the law allowed to happen as a transition.

The problem that created for them was it reset their $1,000 deductible. They met the $1,000 in the high-risk pool, and they met the $1,000 deductible again in the second half of that year.

The insurance they have been able to find costs them four times what they were paying before. It is not 135 percent of the old premium. I guess four times that would be 550 percent of the old premium. So somebody who was paying 135 percent of what used to be the normal premium for an individual is now paying 550 percent of what used to be the premium for the old individual. If that was the way to help people who had a preexisting condition, they better hope the Federal Government doesn't try to help them any more.

Mark, from Parkville, says his two sons—young and healthy as they were, according to him—just had a 20-percent increase in the policies they had. The only reason they were given for the increase was that the new requirements of the Affordable Care Act meant their premium would go up. Mark said he lived out of the country for 2 years and was amazed to find upon his return that the cost for the same type of health coverage he had before he left went up from $250 a month to $1,000 a month.

Bill, from St. James, MO, said his deductible went from $1,000 to $2,500.

In Missouri, West Virginia, and lots of places, you and I know that if the individual deductible is $2,500, a family looks at that—that is just like not having insurance at all. If a couple of you happen to get sick that year, it is suddenly $5,000.

I met with some Missouri hospital folks last week in St. Louis. They said their fastest growing uncollected debt was now among people with insurance. Why would that be? Because people with insurance suddenly have a deductible that is much higher than the average person with insurance used to have.

The point they were making was that people can't pay $2,500 or $3,000 or $5,000 or an even higher deductible, so that part of the bill doesn't get paid. That is the new growing debt that hospitals have.

These people who have the high deductibles are insured for maybe lots of things they didn't used to be insured for, but they don't use any of the things they are now insured for that they didn't used to be insured for. Bill from St. James says:

> ObamaCare sure has not helped us.
>
> I work for a small business that has renewed my healthcare and my deductible has risen from $1,000 to $2,500. My visits went from a $20 copay to a $30 copay and specialists from $50 copay to $75 copay.

He says he doesn't understand how he is helped by the new health care law.

Carl, in Lee's Summit, MO, said he has type 1 diabetes and his deductible went up to $7,500. Again, for most families, a $7,500 deductible is like not having insurance at all. If we could go

back to where we had the health savings account where you had a high deductible and you had your health savings account and that high deductible would kick in only if you had to pay the high deductible—I never saw a health savings account plan that would not be cheaper than these plans that cover a lot of things, but they cover a lot of things a lot of people don't need.

Carl says:

To keep our premium rates down my employer had to raise our deductible to $7,500 with no prescription benefit until it is met, so now instead of putting away $400 per month for my retirement I have to spend it on insulin and diabetic supply's.

How is this ACA helping any honest working American who is trying to take care of themselves and not rely on the government?

Carl's point is that the money he used to spend to prepare for his own retirement he now spends to pay for his insulin and diabetes medicine that used to be covered—until this year—by his policy.

Christine, from Kansas City, said her husband's employer was forced to make changes in their insurance resulting in a deductible that went from $1,300 to $6,100.

If this had been the way we would explain this, that somehow—let's assume we are insuring more people. There is no reason to believe that yet, but let's assume we are, but we are insuring more people with what I have here today—a $7,500 deductible, a $6,100 and a $2,500 deductible.

She says:

Our deductible went from a manageable $1,300 to a devastating $6,100.

I recently sent in scripts for my Dr and I can't imagine how much they will be. We were told they would be between $25 & $200 depending on the cost of the drug.

Remember, they are all before you get the deductible.

I have a letter from Fred from Columbia. He says that a drug company that makes one of his prescriptions no longer offers him a discount. The pharmacy told him it was because of the Affordable Care Act.

I am perfectly willing to believe the Affordable Care Act has become an excuse for some things, and this may be one of them. I have not talked to the pharmacy in this case, but I do know these are problems other individuals are having because their insurance doesn't cover what it used to cover.

Fred is a retired State employee and he said his plan doesn't offer as much coverage as it used to.

Houston and Shirley from Peculiar, MO, have a supplemental health insurance. Their supplemental health insurance increased by $330 since the Affordable Care Act was passed. They said their policy increased $149—this is their supplemental policy.

They say:

Senator Blunt, we are on Medicare and have a supplemental health insurance. Our monthly premiums were a little less than $165 [prior to the ACA's passage in 2010], and now as of January 1, 2014, is $498.40. Our premium has increased by $149.55 a month.

That is for their supplemental insurance.

Just last week Medicare Advantage, which serves people in underserved areas—whether they live in the inner cities or rural communities—has had that competition reduced as well.

I will say that if there were ever a time when we should take a second look at something—and the facts that every one of us have in our office suggest we take a look at it, and even demand we take a look at it—it is this policy that is hurting Americans and hurting families.

If we had this debate again, the country, the health care providers, and the Congress of the United States would be a whole lot better prepared to talk about what needs to be talked about than apparently the Congress was prepared to talk about in 2009 and 2010.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Several weeks ago, February 12, to be exact, as Washington, DC, was braced for a snowstorm and the Senate rushed to finish its business before the Presidents' Day recess, the senior Senator from Arkansas came to the floor to offer unanimous consent to confirm a district court judge for his State. Before he made the request, I spoke with that Senator who, to his credit, was one of only three Democrats to vote against the so-called nuclear option in November.

Although I was sympathetic to his desire to see his home State judge confirmed, I objected to his request to bypass the procedure the majority adopted in November, including recorded cloture and confirmation votes.

I did so based on principle. I did so because after 52 Democrats voted to strip us Republicans in the minority of our rights, the very least we could do is to ask the majority to utilize the procedure they voted to adopt. After all, the simple fact is that the minority can no longer stop nominees. That is the result of the nuclear option, and that was, of course, the whole point of what the majority did in November.

So the Senator from Arkansas offered his unanimous consent request, and I withheld my consent. We had our exchange on the floor, but we did so courteously, and that is what Senators should do. Later that evening the majority leader came to the floor and made another unanimous consent. Senator CORNYN objected for the same reason I had objected. Thereafter, the majority leader exercised the power that he has—he alone possesses it—to move these judges and filed cloture on four district court nominees. That set up several votes for last Monday evening.

That evening, during our side's hour of debate time—and that is all we have anymore for Circuit judges; we have 1 hour of debate time on each side. That evening I spoke on the current state of the Senate with respect to the legislative process. I spoke about how our Founding Fathers intended the Senate to operate. I spoke on how the Senate used to operate, how it should operate and, sadly, how it does the opposite. I spoke about how the majority leader routinely files cloture on bills before debate has even begun. I spoke about how in today's Senate, in what is supposed to be the world's greatest deliberative body, the Senators from great States all over this Nation are shut out of the process of legislating and sometimes even debating.

As our side's hour of debate time neared its end, the distinguished chairman of our committee asked if I would yield him a few minutes of our time. I, of course, agreed to extend him that courtesy. I extended him the courtesy even though I knew he would use that time to argue against everything I just said. I extended him the courtesy because I know he would do the same for me, and, as a matter of fact, he has done exactly that same thing for me. That is the Senate. We are courteous to each other, even when we disagree.

As I said, that was Monday night—eight days ago. On Tuesday morning, we had a series of stacked votes related to those district court nominees. We had several cloture votes as well as confirmation votes. I voted against cloture, along with many of my colleagues. I don't presume to speak for my colleagues, but I voted against cloture to register my objection to a process arrived at via brute force—in other words, by the action of the nuclear option.

But the majority leader wasn't content to simply use the procedures he led his caucus to adopt last November when the nuclear option was adopted—when the minority rights on judges were taken away. He wanted voice votes rather than recorded votes on those lifetime appointments—and I emphasize lifetime appointments—so they deserve serious consideration. At that point, I objected, and I exercised the right of a Senator to ask for a rollcall vote of the yeas and nays.

I supported each of the nominees on final confirmation. Some of my colleagues opposed them. But even if the votes had been unanimous, the right to demand a recorded vote is one of the most basic and fundamental rights of any Senator. There is absolutely nothing wrong with exercising that right, especially when it comes to approving lifetime appointments to the courts.

Before we had that recorded vote, I took the opportunity to remind my colleagues of how well this President is doing with respect to getting the judges he nominates confirmed by the Senate. Specifically, thus far in this Congress, we have confirmed 50 of President Obama's judicial nominees. By way of comparison, at this point in President Bush's second term, we had only confirmed 21 judicial nominees. That is 50 for President Obama and 21 for President Bush. Those numbers

compare both district and circuit nominations. That is a benchmark both sides typically use.

So why are Republicans blamed by Democrats for not approving judges, especially when over the course of 5 years and 2 months now we have approved 223 judges and only disapproved two. Those are basic, unassailable facts.

In response, the majority leader described our request for recorded votes, as I was speaking about eight days ago, as ''a waste of taxpayer time.'' Then he concluded his brief remarks by saying this: ''I would suggest to my friend the senior Senator from Iowa that he not believe his own words because they are simply not true.''

That was on Tuesday, a week ago. Two days later, on Thursday evening, the majority leader came to the floor and proffered a unanimous consent request for several district court judges. Senator MORAN was on the floor at the time and objected for our side. Thereafter, the majority leader filed cloture on four district court judges and the nominee to lead the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice. That is a right the majority leader has under our rules.

A few minutes later the majority leader returned to the floor so he could, as he described, ''say a few words about the man who does all the objecting around here—or a lot of the objecting.''

He then proceeded to quote extensively from a speech I delivered in 2005. He then accused me of violating senatorial courtesy during floor consideration of the immigration bill because I objected to consideration of amendments approved by Democrats, without assurances that we would vote on amendments Members on my side thought we had a right to offer, as any Senator should have a right to offer amendments.

Even if some of the amendments the Democrats wanted had bipartisan support, I was the Senator standing up and defending the right of our Members to offer amendments—even controversial amendments. To be clear, I was prepared to vote on any Democratic amendment provided the Republican amendments were not restricted.

The majority leader then concluded his highly discourteous remarks by saying this:

> The senior Senator from Iowa is talking out of both sides of his mouth, and the people of Iowa should check this out. They should see what he says and what he does.

Given how inappropriate these remarks were and that they roughly coincided with several other inappropriate comments the majority leader made last week, I feel compelled to respond, and, of course, that is what I am doing.

Let me start by reviewing briefly how we arrived where we are today. As I said, the majority leader quoted from a speech I delivered in 2005. For the benefit of my colleagues who weren't here at the time, that was back when the Democrats were indiscriminately filibustering a host of President Bush's highly qualified nominees for the circuit courts. Make no mistake. The Democrats were utilizing the filibuster on judges at that time to an extent never witnessed before in our Nation's history.

During this time, they were filibustering 10 different circuit court nominees. So, as I said, the majority leader quoted from a speech I delivered during the debate of May 23, 2005. What he failed to mention is that six days earlier, on May 17, 2005, he said this on the Senate floor regarding the nuclear option:

> It appears that the Majority Leader—

Referring to then majority leader Senator Frist—

> cannot accept any solution which does not guarantee all current and future judicial nominees an up-or-down vote. That result is unacceptable to me because it is inconsistent with the constitutional checks and balances. It would essentially eliminate the role of the Senate minority in confirming judicial nominations and turn the Senate into a rubberstamp for the President's choices.

I am not going to relitigate that fight today, except to say this. At the time, Republicans, myself among them, were arguing that those nominees should be afforded an up-or-down vote. But as the quotation I just read demonstrates, Democrats refused. At the end of the day, our side lost that debate. We didn't believe judicial nominees should be subjected to a 60-vote threshold nor did we believe we should play by two sets of rules. So when the roles were reversed and there was a Democrat in the White House, Republicans utilized the tool as the Democrats did. The only difference was that we used it much more sparingly. As I said, we have approved 223 Obama nominees to the courts and only disapproved two.

The Democrats, of course, didn't like being treated to the tactics they pioneered, so they began to threaten to utilize the so-called nuclear option.

A lot of negotiations ensued between our side and the majority leader. That is the way the Senate most often gets things done—negotiating to a consensus. Again, I am not going to review every detail, but as any Member of this body can tell us, the result of those negotiations was this. The minority—this time the Republicans—relinquished certain rights regarding nominations. We did it by negotiation.

For instance, district court nominations used to be subject to 30 hours of debate. They are now subject to only 2 hours. In exchange for relinquishing those rights, the majority leader of the Senate gave his word that he would oppose any effort to use the nuclear option.

On January 27, 2011, the majority leader said this on the Senate floor: ''I will oppose any effort in this Congress or the next to change the Senate rules other than through regular order.''

Notwithstanding that promise, at the beginning of the next Congress, we were, once again, on the receiving end of threats regarding the nuclear option. Once again, on January 24, 2013, after lots of negotiations, the majority leader again gave his commitment. Here is what he said on the floor of this Chamber: ''Any other resolutions related to Senate procedure would be subject to a regular order process, including consideration by the Rules Committee.''

That commitment mattered. It mattered to me, and it mattered to my colleagues. We as the minority relinquished certain rights. In exchange for extinguishing those rights, we received a commitment from the majority leader of the Senate.

Remember, I say to my colleagues, please: This is the Senate. Not only are we courteous to one another, but we keep our word.

Ten months after making that commitment, on November 21, 2013, the majority leader and 51 other Democrats voted to invoke the nuclear option. They chose to adopt a new set of procedures for confirming judges.

So that is how we got to where we are today. Yet three months later, when the minority has the audacity to insist that the majority utilize the procedures they voted to adopt, the majority leader comes to the floor to level an ad hominem attack.

Amazingly, given the commitments he made at the beginning of the last Congress, he accuses me of speaking out of both sides of my mouth. The fact of the matter is there is absolutely nothing wrong with demanding debate time and rollcall votes, especially on lifetime appointments to the judiciary, and especially after the majority chose to adopt these very procedures just last November. That is not a ''waste of taxpayer time,'' as the majority leader called it. It is representative government. While I am on the floor of the Senate and while I am on the subject of floor procedure, let me say this about the legislative process we have been following on the floor. I spoke at length on this subject a week ago yesterday, just as I have on several other occasions. I have been highly critical of the process we follow these days on the floor. But I have always tried to avoid making my criticisms personal. I have always tried to be courteous. But there is no getting around this fact. It is nothing short of a travesty that great Senators from all over the Nation must go to the majority leader to ask permission to offer amendments. Proud Senators from proud States, Republican Senators and Democratic Senators, conservative Senators, liberal Senators, northerners and southerners, appropriators and authorizers, hawks and doves, all of these Senators have been reduced to this. They are forced to come before one individual on bended knee to ask permission—permission—to offer an amendment. That is not as it should be in the world's greatest deliberative body—the Senate.

So am I highly critical of the legislative process we undergo on the floor? Absolutely, I am. But I didn't criticize the majority leader in a personal or discourteous way. I didn't accuse him of ''talking out of both sides of his mouth,'' as he did of this Senator. I wasn't attacking him personally; I was defending the rights of 99 other Senators as well as my own rights as a Senator.

What exactly is the majority leader afraid of, anyway? Taking a few hard votes? We are paid to take hard votes. We are sent here to exercise our best judgment on behalf of our constituents. That is how our Republic is designed.

It does not have to be that way. Consider how amendments are handled in the Judiciary committee, as an example—something that ought to be followed here in the U.S. Senate.

Our chairman—I should say the senior Senator of this body, the President pro tempore, Senator LEAHY—our chairman does not tell us in the minority—Republicans—or even the Democrats what we are allowed to offer; nor does he tell us how many amendments we are allowed to offer.

He controls the agenda, as you would expect a chairman to do. But we get to offer amendments. As a result, every single Senator of our committee—whether they like it or not—contributes to the process.

The chairman controls the agenda. The minority offers amendments. And the majority has to vote on those amendments. That happens to be the process.

That is what happens when you have a chairman who respects the rights of U.S. Senators. There is absolutely no reason we could not do exactly that same thing right here on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

Let me mention one other thing about what the majority leader said the other night because I found it particularly offensive.

Immediately after accusing me of ''talking out of both sides of my mouth,'' the majority leader suggested that the people of Iowa, my constituents, should pay attention to what I say and what I do. Well, they do.

But let me relate something to my colleagues about how I keep track, keep in touch with Iowans. The people of Iowa know who they elected to the Senate. They know that ever since I was first sworn in in this body in January 1981, I have fought all day, every day, to represent them.

I know my constituents. They know me. I go to constituent meetings in every county—every one of 99 counties—every year. Multiply that 99 by 32 years, and you get a fairly large number. I have been in 25 counties so far this year. So I talk to my constituents. I read their mail. I know, for instance, how hard ObamaCare has been on families in my State.

So I find it personally offensive for the majority leader to come to the floor, as he did last Wednesday, and accuse Americans, including my constituents, of telling lies when they share their stories about how ObamaCare is impacting them.

Last Thursday evening the majority leader came to the floor so he could, as he described it, ''say a few words about the man who does all the objecting around here.''

Well, Mr. President, do I object? You bet I do. So do the rest of my committee members on the Judiciary Committee when it comes to things of the Judiciary Committee; so does the rest of our caucus.

We object to the authoritarian way this Senate is being run. We object to being shut out of the legislative process. We object to dismissing constituent stories of ObamaCare as lies. We object to taking to the floor of the U.S. Senate to attack fellow citizens as ''un-American'' because they have the audacity to exercise First Amendment rights. And, yes, we object to the discourteous ad hominem attacks on Senate colleagues because they choose to exercise their right to demand rollcall votes on lifetime appointments.

It should stop. The Senate should return to being the greatest deliberative body in the world.

I yield the floor.

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

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

ADEGBILE NOMINATION

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I rise to speak on the nomination of Debo Adegbile to serve as Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division.

Some Americans may vaguely recall Mumia Abu-Jamal from the ''Free Mumia'' T-shirts and posters that once cluttered college campuses.

Maureen Faulkner will forever remember him as a cold-blooded cop killer who left her as a widow at age 24.

Maureen Faulkner has endured three decades of endless appeals and a dishonest international campaign to turn her husband's killer into a celebrated icon for some on the radical left.

Now one of the lawyers who helped promote that campaign, Debo Adegbile, has been nominated to lead the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. This cannot stand and I hope the Senate will not confirm him.

Let's review the facts.

At 3:51 a.m. on December 9, 1981, 25-year-old police officer Daniel Faulkner pulled over a car in the city of Philadelphia. The car's headlights were off, driving the wrong way down a one-way street.

The driver exited the car and began assaulting Officer Faulkner. The driver's brother, Mumia Abu-Jamal, was watching from across the street. Four eyewitnesses saw Abu-Jamal race across the street, shoot Daniel Faulkner in the back, and while Officer Faulkner was lying helplessly on the ground, Mumia Abu-Jamal shot several more bullets into Faulkner's chest and face.

Three other witnesses heard Abu-Jamal brag that he had shot Daniel Faulkner and hoped that Faulkner would die.

During the trial, when Daniel Faulkner's bloodstained shirt was displayed, the jury saw Abu-Jamal turn in his chair and smirk at Officer Faulkner's young widow Maureen.

So it was no surprise when a Pennsylvania jury took just 3 hours to convict Abu-Jamal of murder, and the next day 2 hours to sentence him to death.

Instead of allowing Daniel Faulkner's young widow to grieve in peace, a group of political opportunists decided to use this case to further their own political agendas. They fabricated claims of racism. They spread lies about the trial and the evidence. They organized rallies that, amazingly, portrayed Mumia Abu-Jamal as the victim.

Before long, Abu-Jamal was a cause celebre, complete with adoring Hollywood celebrities, ''Free Mumia'' T-shirts and posters. He had his own HBO special, and they even named a street after him in Paris.

In 2009, 27 years after Daniel Faulkner's murder, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, or LDF, decided they would join the fray.

For decades before Mr. Adegbile assumed his leadership role in the LDF, the LDF served as a force for truth and justice for all Americans—a very important and well-deserved reputation for having done that. But, unfortunately, LDF's representation of Abu-Jamal promoted neither truth nor justice.

It is important to point out this is not a case about every accused person deserving a legal defense. That is a principle upon which I hope there is no disagreement, certainly not from me. The fact is, though, Abu-Jamal had multiple high-cost lawyers already volunteering their time.

Mr. Adegbile was director of litigation for the LDF. He told the Senate Judiciary Committee that he ''supervised the entire legal staff'' at LDF—18 lawyers. Also, he was, in the words of the LDF's own Web site, responsible for LDF's advocacy ''both in the courts of law and in the court of public opinion.''

This is important to understand because this duty to supervise has very specific implications for lawyers. A lawyer must confirm that the lawyers he oversees are honest while presenting facts in a case. The law backs this up. Supervising lawyers can be sued for malpractice or sanctioned by a court for the actions of the lawyers he or she supervises.

And how did the LDF's lawyers comport themselves under Mr. Adegbile's

direction and leadership and supervision? Well, under Mr. Adegbile's oversight, LDF lawyers promoted the pernicious myth that Abu-Jamal was an innocent man and that he was framed because of his race.

There was never any merit to the claims of racism. That was a conclusion that was investigated and reached by both State and Federal courts.

In fact, the jury that convicted and sentenced Abu-Jamal to death included two African Americans and would have included one more except that Abu-Jamal himself ordered his lawyer not to seat that third juror.

Yet, in February of 2011, Mr. Adegbile's group issued a press release stating that ''Mumia Abu-Jamal's conviction and death sentence are relics of a time and place that was notorious for police abuse and racial discrimination.''

In May of 2011, two of the lawyers supervised by Mr. Adegbile traveled to France. They went there for a rally on behalf of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

One LDF lawyer said she was ''overjoyed'' that Abu-Jamal's death sentence was suspended, but she bemoaned the fact that Abu-Jamal would not have a new trial and so could not be set free.

The other LDF lawyer described Abu-Jamal as one of the ''people who are innocent'' but ''will continue to be put to death in America.''

At another event in New York City that same year, a lawyer working for Mr. Adegbile gushed, ''It is absolutely my honor to represent Mumia Abu-Jamal.'' She continued: ''there is no question in my mind, there is no question in the mind of anyone at the Legal Defense Fund, that the justice system has completely and utterly failed Mumia Abu-Jamal'' and that failure ''has everything to do with race.''

I agree that the justice system has failed. But it has failed Officer Danny Faulkner and his family.

No one understands this story of injustice better than Officer Danny Faulkner's widow Maureen. Maureen Faulkner pleaded with the Senate Judiciary Committee for a chance to tell her story, for a chance to testify before the committee as they were deliberating the candidacy of Mr. Adegbile. But the Senate Democrats on the committee would not allow her to testify. They did not let her tell her story and, instead, they voted to send his name on to the Senate floor for confirmation.

I think Maureen Faulkner has a right to be heard. So I hope my colleagues will listen as I read a letter she wrote addressing all of us:

Dear Senators,

While I would have preferred to do so personally, I'm writing this letter appealing to your sense of right and wrong, good and evil as you consider the nomination of Debo Adegbile to be the next head of the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice.

33 years ago my husband, Philadelphia Officer Daniel Faulkner, was violently murdered by a self-professed ''revolutionary'' named Mumia Abu-Jamal. I was 24 years old. While most of my friends spent their summer at the Jersey Shore, I sat in a hot steamy courtroom and watched in horror and disbelief as the man who murdered my husband tried to turn the courtroom into a political stage where he could spew his hatred and contempt for this country and our judicial system.

At the moment my husband's blood stained shirt was displayed by the evidence handler, Mumia Abu-Jamal turned in his chair and smirked at me; demonstrating his contempt for law enforcement. Thankfully, a racially mixed jury that was selected by Abu-Jamal while representing himself, found him guilty. The following day they sentenced him to death for the brutal act he committed.

That's when my second nightmare began. For three decades, my family and I endured appeal after appeal—each rooted in lies, distortions and allegations of civil rights violations. And year after year, judge after judge, the conviction and sentence were unanimously upheld. Then, thirty years after the fact, my family, society and I were denied justice when three Federal District Court judges who have found error in every capital case that has come before them overturned the death sentence.

Today, as my husband lies thirty three years in the grave, his killer has become a wealthy celebrity. He pens books and social commentaries critical of our country. He regularly uses his nearly unlimited access to the prison telephone to do radio programs, has cable TV in his cell and is permitted to hold his wife, children and grandchildren in his arms when they visit.

Old wounds have once again been ripped open and additional insult is brought upon our law enforcement community in this country by President Obama's nomination of Debo Adegbile. While publicly demonstrating that he doesn't even know my husband's name, Mr. Adegbile fains sympathy and caring for my family and me.

In reality, Mr. Adegbile was a willing and enthusiastic accomplish in Mumia Abu-Jamal's bid to cheat us of the justice we had waited so many years for. Mr. Adegbile freely chose to throw the weight of his organization behind Mumia Abu-Jamal and he has publicly stated that he would get Mumia Abu-Jamal off death row.

Mr. Adegbile holds Mumia Abu-Jamal, a remorseless unrepentant cop killer, in high esteem. We know this because attorneys working under Mr. Adegbile's supervision have stood before public rallies held in support of my husband's killer and openly professed that it was ''an extreme honor'' to represent the man who put a hollow based bullet into my husband's brain as he lay on the ground, wounded, unarmed and defenseless. And while Mr. Adegbile and those who support his nomination will undoubtedly argue that he did not personally make such statements, he did nothing to counter or stop them.

In the end, like so many attorneys before him, Mr. Adegbile's allegations of civil rights abuse rang hollow. Mumia Abu-Jamal's death sentence was overturned not because of civil right abuse as alleged by Mr. Adegbile, but because three judges with a personal dislike for capital punishment conveniently determined that the wording in a standard form given to the jury might have confused them.

While Debo Adegbile may be a well qualified and competent litigator, through his words, his decisions and his actions, he has clearly and repeatedly demonstrated that he is not the best person to fill this important position. Certainly there are others with similar qualifications that would be better choices. I would argue that Mr. Adegbile's decision to defend a cop killer should preclude him from holding any public position.

Your decision means a lot to me personally. The thought that Mr. Adegbile would be rewarded, in part, for the work he did for my husband's killer is revolting.

Throughout my long ordeal I have frequently been labeled a racist by many who support my husband's killer simply because he is black and I white. I have also been asked to throw my name, my voice and my support behind political candidates from both parties. In each case I have declined. I have always believed that my husband's death and my quest for justice transcends politics and race.

From my heart, I'm asking you to do the same thing. Set aside any partisan feelings you have and do the right thing today when you vote on Mr. Adegbile's confirmation. Please spare my family and me from further pain.

Sincerely, Maureen Faulkner.

As the Justice Department's Web site explains, the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department ''fulfills a critical mission in upholding the civil and constitutional rights of all individuals.'' Clearly, this requires that the head of the Civil Rights Division have an absolute commitment to truth and justice. There are many highly qualified Americans who can carry out this critical mission. Mr. Adegbile's record creates serious doubts that he is among them. For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to oppose the nomination of Mr. Debo Adegbile to serve as Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division.

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

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here now for the 60th time to ask my colleagues to wake up to the threats of climate change. To see the damage that is being caused by our shifting climate, we need look no further than the Winter Olympics. The most recent Winter Olympics concluded last month. Over 200 countries broadcast the event to an estimated 3.8 billion people worldwide. In Rhode Island, we rooted for our very own Marissa Castelli, who brought home a bronze medal in pairs figure skating.

But what does the future hold for the Winter Olympics? As global temperatures rise and weather patterns shift, the world's glaciers are receding and snowpack in traditionally snowy regions is declining.

A report from the University of Waterloo found that February daytime high temperatures during the Winter Games have been steadily increasing from the 1920s and the 1950s to the 21st century. This forced the International

Olympic Committee to take drastic measures to ensure adequate conditions: ramping up the use of snow-making machines and physically transferring large amounts of snow to the site of the games.

This is just the beginning of things to come. If our emissions are left unchecked, as the Republicans and the polluters prefer, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports we will likely see warming between 4.7 and 8.6 degrees Fahrenheit by the end of the century. The Waterloo report found that only 10 of the 19 cities to previously host the Winter Olympics would be cold enough to host the games by the 2080s. There could be no Sochi Olympics, no Vancouver or Squaw Valley or Sarajevo Olympics, and that is if we are able to stabilize and ultimately reduce our global carbon emissions before the year 2100. If carbon pollution continues on the current pace, only six of these cities could host the games. Forget about Torino and Nagano, Lake Placid and Lillehammer.

Over 100 Olympic athletes from 10 different countries signed a letter asking world leaders to take action to curb climate change. They said:

> As winter Olympic athletes, our lives revolve around the winter and if climate change continues at this pace, the economies of the small towns where we live and train will be ruined. Our sports will be forever changed and the winter Olympics as we know it will be a thing of the past.

Much as we all love the Winter Olympics, we could do without them. We cannot very well do without freshwater. Glaciers represent the largest reserves of freshwater on Earth. Their freshwater feeds our rivers and streams, waters our farms and ranches, and provides some of our drinking water. Glacier loss is happening all over the world, including right here in the United States.

Just like atmospheric warming, ocean acidification, and sea-level rise, this evidence of climate change is not a theoretical projection. It is not a complex scientific model. It is simply observation and measurement.

This is Grinnell Glacier in Montana's Glacier National Park. On top we see the glacier in 1940. On the bottom is the same spot in 2004. Grinnell Glacier has lost 90 percent of its ice in the last century. The glacier has almost disappeared or, as the U.S. Geological Survey puts it, ''effects of global climate change are strikingly clear.'' The U.S. Geological Survey further explains:

> Glacier recession is underway, and many glaciers have already disappeared. The retreat of these small alpine glaciers reflects changes in recent climate as glaciers respond to altered temperature and precipitation. It has been estimated that there were approximately 150 glaciers present in 1850 and most glaciers were still present in 1910 when the park was established. In 2010 we considered there to be only twenty-five glaciers larger than twenty-five acres remaining in Glacier National Park.

So there were 150 glaciers 100 years ago, 25 now.

Here we see a similar change at Lillian Glacier in Washington's Olympic National Park. On the top we see a large healthy glacier in 1905, and this almost unrecognizable view of the same landscape in 2010.

Of course, this is not just happening in the United States. Countries across the world are seeing rapid glacier loss.

A 2013 article published in Nature found clear evidence that the Tibetan glaciers—the world's third largest ice reservoir behind Antarctica and Greenland—are shrinking, even at altitudes above 20,000 feet.

South America's Andean glaciers are retreating at an amazing rate. Climatologists from Ohio State University and NASA loaned my office a piece of a plant that had been preserved under the Quelccaya icecap in Peru for at least 5,200 years, a little bitty piece of plant. But under the pressure of the ice and the cold, it had been preserved for 52 centuries. Today, due to glacial retreat, it was exposed and I now have that piece of plant in my office.

Glaciers are some of the largest reservoirs of fresh matter on Earth. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, glaciers store 69 percent of the world's fresh water. Annual spring glacial melt provides a dependable source of water for streams, plants, spawning fish, farming, and now often hydroelectricity. In Central Asia hundreds of millions of people rely on the Tibetan glaciers to supply drinking water. The same goes for the people of Peru and Bolivia in the Andes.

This is a crisis we must take seriously. Unfortunately, Congress remains barricaded behind a blockade of polluter influence. Only last week a Republican witness at an Environment and Public Works hearing on adapting to climate change argued that we would all be better off if the glaciers just went away—if they just melted away. After all, he told the committee:

> We evolved at the equator in a climate where freezing weather did not exist. . . . It could be said that frost and ice are the enemies of life.

He continued:

> Obviously if the glaciers stop melting, there will be no more meltwater from them. So my questions . . . are, Are you saying you want the glaciers to stop melting? Then where would the irrigation water come from? . . . I say let the glaciers melt.

That is the witness the Republicans put up. Let the glaciers melt.

I guess he missed the difference between seasonal melting, whose annual rhythms fill our streams and rivers for drinking water, fishing and farming, and glaciers outright melting away.

There is another little trick the deniers like to play when it is wintertime. Every time there is a cold snap or a little snow falls in Washington, DC, or back in their home States, they say: How can there be global warming when it is cold out? And, yes, we have had a cold winter. But what scientists and other level-headed observers understand is the changes occurring in the climate are happening over longer periods than just one winter and across broader regions than only one State or even the United States. Moreover, short-term temperature anomalies such as a cold snap might be worse because of climate change, because of changes in the jetstream, for instance. This chart shows how worldwide winter temperatures every year since 1880 compare with the 20th century average.

Do you think there is a trend visible there? Over 100 years, yes, winter is still cold, but it is not as cold as it used to be. This change is ravaging winter sports and tourism across the United States. The National Resources Defense Council found that between 1999 and 2010, a lack of snowfall cost our ski industry $1 billion and up to 27,000 jobs. Before the end of the century, the number of economically viable ski locations in New Hampshire and Maine will be cut in half. Skiing in New York will be cut by three-quarters and, the report says, there will be no ski area in Connecticut or Massachusetts. If we know our geography, we know if that is true of Connecticut and Massachusetts, there goes Rhode Island's Yawgoo Valley ski area and slope.

The Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change, which I started with Representative HENRY WAXMAN, asked the National Basketball Association, Major League Baseball, National Hockey League, National Football League, and the United States Olympic Committee, to tell us what climate change means for their sports.

National Hockey League Deputy Commissioner William Daly wrote:

> Hockey's relationship with the environment is unique. Our sport was born on frozen ponds, where—to this day—players of all ages and skill levels learn to skate. For this magnificent tradition to continue, it is imperative that we recognize the importance of maintaining the environment.

The Park City Foundation in Utah predicts an annual local temperature increase of 6.8 degrees Fahrenheit by 2075, which could cause a complete loss of snowpack in the lower Park City resort area of the Rocky Mountains. The foundation estimates that this will result in thousands of lost jobs, tens of millions in lost earnings, and hundreds of millions in lost economic growth.

While we in Congress equivocate and stall, the evidence of climate change relentlessly mounts. The damage is being done in our atmosphere and our oceans. The longer it takes us to wake up, the harder and more expensive it will be to fix it.

The sickening part is that everyone else is waking up. Sixty-five percent of voters support the President taking significant steps to address climate change now. Another poll found that 82 percent of Americans believe we should start preparing now for rising sea levels and severe storms from climate change.

Even in the party that won't speak the words ''climate change'' any longer—not since Citizens United cleared the way for big spending by polluters in Republican primaries—even in the Republican Party, among young Republican voters 35 and under, the majority of them feel that climate denial is either ignorant, out of touch, or crazy. If that is what young Republicans feel, that is a very poor foundation for the Republican Party to maintain this denier policy.

The campaign of money and denial that imprisons Congress is as poisonous to our American democracy as carbon pollution is to our atmosphere, oceans and, yes, glaciers. It is time to fight back. It is time to wake up.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

ADEGBILE NOMINATION

Mr. CRUZ. I rise today to pay tribute to the men and women across the country serving as police officers who protect law-abiding Americans. It is out of this respect for our Nation's police officers that I also rise to oppose the nomination of Debo Adegbile to be the head of the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division.

We must always remember our Nation's fallen police officers who have bravely given their lives to serve our Nation and to protect us.

Police officers help form the backbone of our country that supports the rule of law. They risk their lives every day to help keep law-abiding citizens safe. According to the FBI, in 2012, 95 law enforcement officers were killed in line-of-duty incidents and 52,901 officers were victims of line-of-duty assaults—52,901.

The New York Times in 2012 observed: ''As violent crime has decreased across the country, a disturbing trend has emerged: rising numbers of police officers are being killed.''

In 2008, 41 officers were killed; in 2009, 48 officers were killed; in 2010, 56 officers were killed; in 2011, 72 officers were killed; and in 2012, 95 officers were killed.

Unfortunately, as Byron York noted today, the New York Times has not reported on the controversial nomination of Debo Adegbile to head the DOJ Civil Rights Division.

It is out of respect for all of our Nation's police officers that I rise to oppose Mr. Adegbile's nomination. Under Adegbile's leadership and supervision, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund brazenly politicized the murder of a Philadelphia police officer, Officer Daniel Faulkner. On December 9, 1981, 25-year-old Officer Faulkner was murdered by Wesley Cook, who is widely known as Mumia Abu-Jamal. Officer Faulkner was shot several times. The fatal shot was when Abu-Jamal pointed the gun inches from Officer Faulkner's face and pulled the trigger.

During the trial it was made known that Abu-Jamal was a supporter of the MOVE Organization, an anarchist group that explicitly advocates for violence against police officers.

In a letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee, Mrs. Faulkner described that during the trial, when her husband's bloodstained shirt was displayed by the evidence handler, Abu-Jamal turned in his chair and smirked directly at her, the grieving widow. The jury convened for a matter of hours before they came back with a guilty verdict and a death sentence. That was 1982.

Fast forward 27 years to the year 2009. Adegbile was at the time the NAACP's Legal Defense Fund Director of Litigation. In 2009, the Legal Defend Fund began advocating for Abu-Jamal—first as an amicus and then as cocounsel. To be clear, every criminal defendant is entitled to an attorney, but Adegbile's representation of Abu-Jamal was pure advocacy.

Abu-Jamal's guilt was not in doubt. Four eyewitnesses saw the shooting. Abu-Jamal confessed and stated in front of three witnesses that he hoped Officer Faulkner died.

There was significant ballistic and forensic evidence. For example, the murder weapon was registered to Abu-Jamal and found at the scene with spent shell casings.

Abu-Jamal already had a team of high-priced lawyers working pro bono, who had filed decades of post-trial petitions and appeals, delaying the carrying out of his sentence.

Under Adegbile's supervision, LDF lawyers fanned the flames of racial tension. Through rallies, protests, and a media campaign, all portrayed Mumia Abu-Jamal, an unrepentant cop killer, as a political prisoner.

For example, a 2011 LDF press release said: ''Abu-Jamal . . . is widely viewed as a symbol of the racial injustices of the death penalty.''

That press release also said: ''Mumia Abu-Jamal's conviction and death sentence are relics of a time and place that was notorious for police abuse and racial discrimination.''

LDF lawyers under Adegbile's supervision went farther than that. They held rallies and protests.

This is advocacy. This is political advocacy. This is extreme and radical advocacy. This is not legal representation. They even went so far as to travel to France to hold multiple rallies for Abu-Jamal. The French had already named a street after Abu-Jamal in a suburb of Paris.

This prompted the House of Representatives in 2006 to vote 368–31 to condemn the murder of Officer Daniel Faulkner and to urge the French town to change that street name.

After fanning those flames of racial tension in the court of public opinion, Adegbile pressed aggressive arguments on race in our courts of law. Thankfully, the State and Federal courts rejected those arguments.

Under Adegbile, the LDF initially argued in court that Abu-Jamal's death sentence should be overturned because he believed there should have been more African Americans on Abu-Jamal's jury.

During his Senate confirmation on January 8, Adegbile said the LDF filed a legal brief regarding merely jury instructions about the death penalty. LDF did make those arguments eventually, but Adegbile's initial arguments had nothing to do with jury instructions. They were arguments that Abu-Jamal's jury was unconstitutional because it didn't have, he argued, a sufficient number of African Americans serving in the jury.

The courts rejected those arguments. The jury that convicted Abu-Jamal had two African Americans serving on it. It would have had a third African American serving on it but Abu-Jamal instructed his lawyers to strike that person.

The Fraternal Order of Police vehemently opposes this nomination. According to a letter written by the president of the FOP, Adegbile's nomination only exacerbates the ''growing division and distrust'' toward local law enforcement agencies—a trend that has continued from the time now-Labor Secretary Thomas Perez was leading the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division.

Peter Kirsanow, a member on the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, wrote:

> Responsible people should agree that going out of your way to defend a convicted cop-killer long after it has become unequivocally clear that he was guilty and had suffered no violation of his civil rights disqualifies one from serving as the head of a division of the U.S. Department of Justice.

The Obama administration's message with the nomination is clear: It wants even more politicization of the Department of Justice. This is insulting to law enforcement officers everywhere. I stand with the Fraternal Order of Police and oppose Adegbile's nomination, and I urge my Democratic colleagues to join the Democratic senior Senator from Pennsylvania, Mr. BOB CASEY, and vote no on this nomination.

This is not a matter of leftwing or rightwing. We all should agree that violent criminals should be punished, and we all should agree that those who go out of their way to advocate for, to celebrate, to lionize convicted cop killers are not suitable for major leadership roles at the U.S. Department of Justice.

I urge every Member of this body to oppose that nomination.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FLAKE. 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. FLAKE. I rise to discuss the nomination of Mr. Debo Adegbile to

head the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice.

I attended Mr. Adegbile's hearing in the Judiciary Committee and submitted additional written questions after the hearing. Unfortunately, after hearing testimony and reviewing his responses to questions, I remain concerned with Mr. Adegbile's ability to set aside more than a decade of advocacy on behalf of this and other liberal causes to serve as a neutral enforcer of our Nation's civil rights laws. And it appears I am not the only person who has reached this conclusion.

His nomination is opposed by numerous law enforcement officers, including those represented by the Fraternal Order of Police, National Sheriff's Association, the Major County Sheriffs' Association, the National Association of Police Organizations, the New Jersey State Policeman's Benevolent Association, and the National Narcotics Officers' Association.

This widespread opposition is clearly not driven by partisanship but by a heartfelt concern that this nominee is not suited for the position.

I have no doubt Mr. Adegbile is an intelligent and hardworking lawyer with a commendable record of advocacy, but that does not mean he should head the Civil Rights Division.

One of the responsibilities of the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division is to handle civil rights violations by law enforcement officers from across the country. However, serious questions have been raised about Mr. Adegbile's ability to apply the law fairly in these cases, given his advocacy on behalf of a convicted cop killer.

As the Fraternal Order of Police stated in its letter of opposition, in the decades Mr. Adegbile pushed this effort, he ''falsely disparaged and savaged the good name and reputation of a lifeless police officer'' in order to further his case.

The National Narcotics Association shares this analysis of Mr. Adegbile's advocacy, noting that he:

> . . . fabricated a baseless and unproven defense while also defaming the victim, Police Officer Daniel Faulkner, which raises serious questions about the nominee's judgment, especially considering the important position to which he has been nominated.

There is no doubt as to Mumia Abu-Jamal's guilt. Afterward, he bragged about shooting Daniel Faulkner, and four witnesses saw the shooting. After being convicted and sentenced, Mumia's lawyers filed dozens of appeals on his behalf, which would suggest he had more than adequate legal representation. However, almost 28 years after his conviction, Mr. Adegbile decided to volunteer his time to assist Mumia. In a series of appeals and press events, Mr. Adegbile's organization called into question the motivations of the law enforcement officers responsible for Mumia's conviction and distorted the record, calling his conviction and sentence a ''relic of a time and place that was notorious for police abuse and racial discrimination.''

As the Philadelphia district attorney's opposition letter states, Mr. Adegbile's work on this case ''sends a message of contempt to police officers who risk their lives every day to maintain the peace.''

The district attorney concluded that Mr. Adegbile ''is ill-suited for a pivotal role in the Justice Department.''

The appalling facts of this case are well known. In fact, in 2006, the House of Representatives passed a resolution condemning the history of this case and recognizing the culpability of Mumia by a vote of 368 to 31. There are others, such as myself, now serving in this Chamber who voted in favor of that resolution.

It is deeply troubling that we are faced with voting on this nominee now, after Senate rules have been broken and the minority has no say in executive or judicial nominations. Requiring the support of at least some minority Senators discourages both the nomination and appointment of fringe or problematic nominees, something which benefits the country as a whole. Those rules ensure the Senate was the cooling saucer that George Washington and the other Founders intended. They also ensured heads of executive agencies were responsive to both the majority and minority parties. That is no longer the case.

I do not think we would be moving forward on such a divisive nominee—one who elicits widespread opposition from across the political spectrum—if the majority had not employed the nuclear option last November. I hope we don't move forward with this nomination. I hope my colleagues will join me and others in voicing opposition to this nomination moving ahead.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues to join me in opposing the nomination of Debo Adegbile to head the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice.

The Constitution grants to the President the power to nominate individuals to head the various Federal agencies and departments, but it falls to us in the Senate to ensure those nominees are worthy of the honor and are ready for such responsibility. I don't make it a practice of opposing nominees. In fact, I generally give the President discretion there. I have voted to give him wide latitude in filling the executive branch with individuals of his choice when I believe they are qualified. I have voted along with the minority Republicans who endorsed and confirmed a number of the President's nominees. But when it comes to a nominee who lacks the essential qualifications to fill one of these high offices, those of us charged with providing advice and consent cannot remain silent. Unfortunately, this is one of those cases.

It takes more than a law degree from a prestigious school and an impressive résumé to head an agency to support the Civil Rights Division at the Department of Justice. Most importantly, I think it takes judgment which cannot be measured by test scores or diplomas. It can only be measured over time through someone's actions.

If we look at Mr. Adegbile's record, it is obvious to me and so many of us in the Senate and around the country, including the Fraternal Order of Police, who have not opposed an executive branch nomination, by the way, in 17 years, who are taking a strong stand against this confirmation.

First, as some of his colleagues and my colleagues on the Senate floor have noted, Mr. Adegbile has a history of taking positions on some of our fundamental constitutional rights that I think are out of step with the views of the American people, the judgments of our judiciary, and our Nation's history.

In the case of Hosanna-Tabor v. EEOC, Mr. Adegbile argued that religious institutions do not have the right to hire or fire individuals responsible for conveying a church's teachings, a view that, were it to become law, would severely undermine religious liberty. Mr. Adegbile was so out of step with the Constitution on that issue that his view was rejected by the Supreme Court 9–0, which in today's typical 5–4 split in the Supreme Court is quite an accomplishment.

Mr. Adegbile's view on the First Amendment is troubling. So too are his views of the Second Amendment. He has repeatedly asserted that the Second Amendment does not ''protect an individual's right to keep and bear arms.'' If Mr. Adegbile had his way, millions of Americans would lose one of their most cherished rights, just like that. Whenever a piece of gun control legislation comes to the floor of this Chamber, my colleagues on both sides of the aisle—and, in fact, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—assure us they will always respect a fundamental right to bear arms. It is unfortunate that despite the words of the Constitution and its interpretation by the Supreme Court, Mr. Adegbile cannot give us those same assurances.

There is the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Abu-Jamal is a murderer. In 1981 he gunned down a police officer named Daniel Faulkner on a Philadelphia street. In an act of unmatched brutality, Mumia Abu-Jamal stood over Officer Faulkner as he lay dying and shot him in the face. A mountain of evidence from eyewitness accounts, forensics, to his own words makes it clear beyond any doubt that Abu-Jamal killed Officer Faulkner on that day in December 1981.

Still, Abu-Jamal deserved his day in court as would any other American accused of a crime. He got his day in court. He deserved competent counsel, and he got that too. He deserved an opportunity to appeal, and he got it. In fact, after the matter turned from a criminal matter to an issue of justice and to a political cause, he received some of the best counsel in the country and they filed appeal after appeal, all of which were rejected.

But that didn't stop Mr. Adegbile from claiming that Abu-Jamal was a victim of racism and a corrupt judicial system. For Mr. Adegbile, Abu-Jamal's case was apparently an opportunity to focus more on a political agenda than the case at hand. Abu-Jamal's guilt or innocence was not really the concern.

Debo Adegbile is free to make any arguments he sees fit about the First and Second Amendments. He is free to turn the murder of a police officer into a cause to advance a political agenda. When he does so, I think it says something about his judgment and it says something about his fitness to lead the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice.

The Department of Justice and police forces around our country should be working together to ensure that minority rights are respected and that civil rights abuses are punished. In my view, this nominee would only make that work more difficult. As the Fraternal Order of Police wrote in a letter to President Obama, if Mr. Adegbile is confirmed it will serve to ''exacerbate growing division and distrust'' between the Civil Rights Division—which is charged with securing our most basic freedoms—and the men and women of law enforcement who defend those freedoms by putting their lives on the line every day.

I think we can and should do better with a nominee who can work with the Fraternal Order of Police and other law enforcement around the country in ensuring that our most basic freedoms are secured through the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division.

For these reasons I oppose the nomination of Mr. Adegbile to this position, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do the same.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

UKRAINE CRISIS

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I have been discussing the Ukraine crisis with my constituents and a number of Indiana media outlets for the last few days. Virtually every interview or conversation on the subject includes this question: What difference does this make to us here in Indiana? What American interests are at stake? These are legitimate questions, and they deserve an answer because before we commit America to address potential conflicts, we need to describe and define just what our interest is and why we should be engaged.

In this conflict we are not talking about the use of military force, but we are thinking about and talking about and should be examining other measures that can influence the outcome of a crisis situation that could have significant consequences for the American people.

If we can't answer that question and we can't address that with a compelling answer, then we should not get engaged. But if we can determine a compelling answer and reason why we should engage in some form, then we need to make sure the American people know why it is we are renewing this and why this is important.

Ukraine is 5,000 miles away. The trade between our two countries is minuscule and shrinking. Only 30 percent of the Ukrainian population shares our Christian faith or identifies with any faith. Ukraine is the source of no energy or crucial materials. Indeed, the country is a source of instability and corruption. So why should Americans and Hoosiers care about what is happening to a country 5,000 miles away? Well, let me suggest some reasons and then perhaps some suggestions as to what would be the best way for us to help influence this crisis situation in a way that is positive for our country and, frankly, for Western democracy and for the world.

The first and most obvious reason we should take this seriously is the central lesson of history: Conflicts—even catastrophes—sometimes grow from small beginnings. Most know that the assassination of an imperial relative in a Balkan town in 1914 led to the death by violence of 37 million people—World War I. We also know that the cataclysm of World War II began with the stealth invasion of Austria and Czechoslovakia in 1938. Despite warnings as to what this might lead to, we saw a tragic loss of tens of millions of people in World War II. This is eerily reminiscent of Russia's moves on Crimea last week.

A history lesson closer in time is taught by the Balkan wars of the 1990s. When Serb gunboats shelled Dubrovnik, a Croatian city, in 1992, the world—and most especially Croatia's European neighbors—did exactly nothing. Our own Secretary of State said repeatedly that there were no American interests at stake. Before that view was changed and NATO eventually intervened 3 years later, more than 100,000 people had been slaughtered.

If the international community had had the collective wisdom and leadership—and, frankly, courage and guts—to simply tell Belgrade that civilian European population centers are no longer shelled in modern Europe, all of that suffering could have been prevented and our own Armed Forces could have stayed in their barracks and in their homes.

We should draw from such lessons so that we need not confront later the question of whether we should intervene militarily in a Ukrainian civil war or a war between Ukraine and Russia. Instead, we must confront now the choice we have of doing nothing and letting Putin have his way or leading an American and an international response to impose penalties on Putin's Russia so that he comes to his senses.

A second and related American interest is in the stability of the European continent itself. Ukraine is not an obscure sideshow. It is comprised of remnants of two European empires and deeply embedded in the integrated structure, identity, economy, and culture of Europe as a whole. Disaster there threatens a very great deal in Europe, a continent we have spent 100 years, trillions of dollars, and hundreds of thousands of lives to stabilize. European security and stability have been at the very heart of our foreign and defense policy for an entire century. If American foreign policy and American strategic interests in the world have any permanent core, it is that interest in Europe's well-being.

Ukraine's conflict with the remnants of Soviet-style aggression portends serious threats to the rest of Russia's border lands, nearly all of which were long dominated by Red Army presence and force. The Baltic states must be alarmed right now. If we do nothing, they could panic.

Poland has already summoned NATO councils to consider consequences for its own security and therefore for the security of the alliance. Georgia painfully reflects that the paltry international response to its own war with Russia five years ago surely emboldened Putin in this latest adventure.

In other words, we could be looking at a Sudetenland moment. We hope that is not the case.

It is no secret that Putin has imperial ambitions motivated by his pathological insecurities and a quest to restore lost glories. These are dangerous delusions that, if not confronted firmly, could come to threaten us all.

Beyond history and beyond the threats to continental security instability, I am even more concerned about America's place in the world and how inaction will further harm it. Abroad, we are increasingly seen as a spent force, exhausted by interminable wars, politically divided and inert, financially strained, and floundering without firm, articulate, determined leadership. This is a bleak, incomplete picture of my country that more than anything else makes me determined to be part of an effort to correct this perception of America.

In many ways, we can potentially look at the Ukrainian crisis as an opportunity. We have a chance now to summon our collective will and impose costs for Putin's irresponsible behavior. We have many robust capabilities to reward those who join us in responsible, mutually productive cooperation in managing world affairs and in punishing those who do not.

This is the moment to demonstrate our return to the leadership role that the realities of this harsh world have long imposed upon us. This situation, this crisis which we now face in Ukraine, can be a moment to demonstrate our return to a leadership role desperately needed by this tortured world where the realities of this harsh world have long imposed upon us.

It is in our national interest, in my opinion, to lead the world toward solutions that we know are best for us all. No other country can manage it. We have seen that. Without that management, we risk things that could harm us in many ways and continue to undermine our role in this world in providing for peace and stability.

For these reasons, tomorrow I will introduce a sense-of-the-Senate resolution articulating some of the steps I think we and the President should consider together. None of these steps involve military force or the preparation for using such force. Now is not the time to add to the violence but, rather, to remove the use of force by all parties as an option.

I hope the resolution will contribute to the search for both a bipartisan, unified government approach to problem-solving and an international consensus on firm actions that will change Russia's behavior. I am saying that we should stand united as Americans with a single message and a single voice led by our leader which shows we are resolute in standing together—hopefully with our European allies and others who want to join us—in condemning the actions taken by Putin and Russia and in offering and proposing meaningful sanctions and measures that will bring the reality of Russia's actions straight to Putin's desk and hopefully cause him to rethink his strategy.

The resolution will commit the Senate to work urgently with the President to identify a package of economic sanctions and other measures to compel Putin to remove armed forces from Ukrainian territory and return that territory to full Ukrainian sovereign control.

Further, I will suggest that we construct a complete comprehensive plan to isolate Putin's Russia from the community of nations. We seek a consensus on such a plan with our friends and allies—everyone who wants to see a sovereign Ukraine, secure within its own border, able to seek its own destiny on its own terms. That is the right of every sovereign nation.

My resolution will also call upon the President to consider a number of measures to isolate and sanction Russia.

We could reschedule a meeting of the G–8 nations to take place as soon as possible, at which meeting the participating nations should seriously consider a U.S. proposal to formally expel Russia.

The United States should propose to NATO that the alliance immediately suspend operation of the Russian-NATO council. The Russian military and diplomatic representation at NATO should be expelled. A close relationship with Russian's defense officials during a time when that country has invaded and occupied a neighbor contravenes the founding purpose of NATO. How could we possibly meet on a Russian-NATO council basis when Russia has invaded and occupied a neighbor?

The President should ask the leadership of FIFA to reconsider its decision to place World Cup 2018 matches in Russia and instead award these games to a more worthy alternative country. Russia has just celebrated the Sochi Olympics. I think we got the real measure of President Putin, a former KGB lieutenant colonel, as to what his real intentions are—it is not to bring more good will and more confidence in that country.

The United States could work with other members of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe—the OSCE—to deploy monitors in Ukraine to help confirm that the security of the Russian-speaking population is not threatened. This pretext for Russian aggression must be removed to international satisfaction.

Senate leadership could dispatch a congressional delegation led by OSCE Commissioners to visit Ukraine and bolster OSCE's involvement in addressing this crisis. Another option would be the United States working with OSCE and German Chancellor Angela Merkel to support her proposal to create an OSCE contact group to pursue dispute resolution and mediate direct negotiations between the Ukrainian and Russian Governments.

The United States should not maintain the current status of diplomatic relations with Russia at current levels. We could downgrade our diplomatic representation while retaining its efficacy by announcing that we will not send our new Ambassador to Moscow. Instead, we could dispatch an experienced professional diplomat to Ukraine to serve as charge d'affaires to handle the crisis. We could also reduce the diplomatic presence to focus exclusively on crisis management, not business as usual. We could close consulates general and require Russia to make reciprocal steps to close their consulates in the United States.

I believe we in Congress should expand the Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act to sanction the Ministry of Defense officials in the chain of command responsible for this invasion, the Duma leadership responsible for rubberstamping it, and Crimean officials complicit in its execution.

The United States should also consider sanctions that might serve to convince more segments of the Russian population that their government is taking irresponsible steps contrary to the people's interests. To this end, we should suspend and could suspend Russia's eligibility for H–2B temporary or seasonal work visas.

This is just a menu of suggestions of actions we can take, actions that I think would impose upon Russia a cost for their brazen attempt to intercede in the affairs of a sovereign nation to, under the most flimsiest of pretenses, invade a country under the pretext that its citizens there, or those who favor support for Russia, are under some type of lethal threat. That is not the case. It has not been demonstrated, and it has not been proven.

Now is the time to act—to act quickly and act together. Our leverage is our leadership. We need to take up that powerful tool and show Putin that he has misjudged us. Now is the time for the United States to reassert its leadership in the world by taking direct action—not through military action but through a menu of measures designed to bring Russia to its senses and designed to protect the sovereign interests of those nations that are seeking to align with the West in a Democratic way. We need that leadership from the President. We need that support from this Congress in a bipartisan measure. And we need to speak with a united voice, hopefully with our European partners and others throughout the Western world and the free world, to send a message that Russia cannot ignore and to impose a measure of costs that will impact that country's economy and impact the decision that has to be made by their President.

Mr. President, with that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative 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. MERKLEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO TEQUIA DELGADO

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Senate is a place where we make friends. We have our differences on policy, but we truly are a Senate family. It is just not that way with Democrats who work in the Senate, it is also the Republicans. When we work together, which we do outside the view of most of the public, we work well together.

One of the troubling things for me—I am sure it is for all of us—is when someone who is a part of the family leaves—especially it applies when you feel so close to the family member. Today, the Democratic cloakroom, the nerve center of the Senate and the entire Senate community, says goodbye to a dedicated staffer Tequia Delgado.

I and we congratulate her on her new role as a member relations advisor for the White House. After graduating from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, IL, Tequia started her Senate career as a staff assistant in my office.

But even before that she spent the summer interning for this brandnew Senator Barack Obama. In 2007 Tequia joined Senator DURBIN's staff. I have never truly forgiven him for that, for taking her from me. But he has done a lot of nice things, so I guess I will have to try to sweep that under the rug sometime, but it has been very hard. I do not think I have ever gotten over that. I have told him often that he stole her from me. But those things happen.

On a serious note, it was the right move for her. It was an advancement for her. She is from Illinois. It has worked out well for her. She became director of constituent services and then a legislative correspondent for Senator DURBIN, my dear friend.

Despite her hard work in my office and that of the assistant Democratic leader, Senator DURBIN, she found time to perform as a cheerleader for the Washington Redskins for 3 years. These are difficult jobs. They practice like the football team. It is hard. They have tryouts. It is quite an honor. So we have always recognized her for this accomplishment. That is certainly what it is.

When she joined the cloakroom staff in 2010, she brought her warm personality and always a positive spirit to her now role. So for 4 years Tequia has worked in the cloakroom, I repeat, the nerve center of the Senate. She has been an invaluable resource to all Senators. She has been an important mentor for Senate interns and pages. She has been a valued teammate and friend to our colleagues.

Tequia's talent, dedication, and friendly demeanor will be missed by me and Members and colleagues alike. I wish her well in this next endeavor. I know she will perform admirably. We are fortunate that she will continue to work closely with the Senate community. That is her job in her new role as a member of the White House team.

Congratulations Tequia and best of luck in everything you do in the future.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN ECUADOR

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to speak briefly, as I have several times over the past year, about the government of Ecuador's President Rafael Correa, which continues its aggressive clamp down on press freedom. Most recently, political cartoonist Xavier Bonilla was reprimanded for a cartoon he drew, and the newspaper he works for, El Universo, was fined for publishing it. El Universal, one of Ecuador's most respected dailies, has been the target of one of the dozens of harassing lawsuits filed by President Correa.

The cartoon by Mr. Bonilla, who goes by the pen name Bonil, depicts a police raid at the home of an investigative journalist, Fernando Villavicencio, who claimed to have documented evidence of corruption in the government. It shows the police knocking down the door to Mr. Villavicencio's house and parading out with computers and filing cabinets.

A government-established media oversight agency, Superintendency of Information and Communication, SUPERCOM, used Ecuador's vague communications law to sanction both Mr. Bonilla and El Universo for publishing an ''institutional position'' over the guilt or innocence of people involved in investigations. It subsequently ordered a major investigation, required a ''correction'' to the cartoon, and fined the newspaper. In doing so, the Correa administration sent a clear message to journalists that criticism of government misconduct will not be tolerated.

I have spoken several times about President Correa's attacks on press freedom and I will continue doing so as long as these restrictive laws are enforced and as long as journalists are threatened for their work. Most recently I recognized the efforts of Janet Hinostroza, an Ecuadoran investigative journalist who was honored by the Committee to Protect Journalists, CPJ, for her commitment to fighting for a free press. Ms. Hinostroza is continually threatened for her work exposing government corruption. Unfortunately, the harassment she and Mr. Bonilla face illustrates a norm, not an anomaly, when it comes to President Correa's attempts to intimidate and silence his critics.

The absurdity of censoring a cartoonist aside, this latest attack further erodes what remains of an independent press in Ecuador. It explains why Human Rights Watch and CPJ continually rank Ecuador among the world's worst for press freedom. It is shameful, it is an embarrassment for the hemisphere, and the people of Ecuador deserve better.

MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, the legalization of marijuana is an issue that has generated significant media attention in recent months. Last year Colorado and Washington State became the first jurisdictions in the world to legalize the production, trafficking, possession and use of marijuana for recreational purposes. The consequences of legalization are only beginning to be understood. But one thing is clear. Legalizing marijuana does not make it any safer. Marijuana remains a Schedule I drug under the Controlled Substances Act. According to that designation, it is a substance that presents ''a high potential for abuse.''

Colorado's previous experience legalizing medical marijuana suggests that the consequences of full-on legalization could be dire for public health and safety. From 2006 to 2010, the number of Colorado drivers involved in fatal car crashes who tested positive for marijuana doubled. The number of Colorado students who have been suspended or expelled for marijuana use has increased considerably. Nearly three-quarters of Denver teenagers in drug treatment reported obtaining marijuana from a ''medical marijuana'' user. Colorado has become a source State for the distribution of marijuana throughout the United States. Law enforcement in my home State of Iowa reports that the percentage of marijuana interdicted there that originated from Colorado has increased from 10 percent in 2010 to 36 percent in 2012.

Against this backdrop, the Obama administration has recently sent mixed signals, especially to young people, about the dangers of marijuana use. President Obama recently stated that in his view, marijuana use was no worse than drinking alcohol. The Department of Justice declined to challenge State laws that have legalized marijuana, despite the obvious conflict with Federal law. Additionally, the Department issued guidance to prosecutors concerning the enforcement of the Controlled Substances Act and Federal money laundering laws that is plainly intended to permit marijuana businesses in these States to grow and flourish. These actions have caused confusion and uncertainty about whether using marijuana is really something that should be discouraged because it is harmful.

However, many community anti-drug coalitions, healthcare professionals, public health officials, and law enforcement groups are speaking out about the dangers of marijuana use. One such group, Smart Approaches to Marijuana—or Project SAM for short—has recently begun to confront the marijuana legalization movement head-on.

One of Project SAM's cofounders, former Congressman Patrick Kennedy, has been outspoken in his efforts to fight the marijuana legalization movement. He has appeared on numerous television and radio shows, including ones where audiences may disagree with his views against legalization. He has bared his own struggles with addiction, offering himself up as a cautionary tale about the dangers of becoming addicted to marijuana and other substances. And he has broken with many in his party by speaking out against the President's permissive attitude toward marijuana use and the Obama administration's failure to enforce the Controlled Substances Act. Indeed, all former DEA Administrators, appointed by Republican and Democratic presidents alike, have joined with Project SAM and others to

oppose the Obama administration's policies in this area.

According to a recent article from NBCnews.com, an article I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD, Project SAM recently launched a serious counter-offensive to the marijuana legalization movement. The organization began by placing a billboard near the Super Bowl stating that ''Marijuana kills your drive.'' Project SAM launched a website dedicated to tracking public health incidents linked to marijuana use in Colorado and Washington to highlight the consequences of legalization in those States. It is also launching websites that will allow current or former marijuana users to share their stories about how marijuana has damaged their lives.

Project SAM has also been active in my home State of Iowa. The organization recently co-hosted town hall meetings with local community anti-drug coalitions, highlighting the risks of legalizing marijuana. Project SAM has also briefed State officials about the dangers of legalizing marijuana.

It is not every day that I have the occasion to praise a Democrat. However, Congressman Kennedy is to be commended for his courage in coming forward and participating in this debate by publicizing the dangers of marijuana use and opposing the Obama administration's failure to enforce Federal law in this area. His voice is a welcome one for those of us who believe that the legalization of marijuana is an unwise policy that will have a profoundly negative effect on public health and the lives of many young people.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From NBCnews.com, Feb. 14, 2014]

TREATMENT OR JAIL: PATRICK KENNEDY WAGES FIERCE ANTI-POT CRUSADE

(By Tony Dokoupil)

As a hard-partying teenager, Patrick Kennedy met President Reagan at a fundraiser for the JFK Library, a meeting captured in a photograph that the former Rhode Island congressman now hangs in his home office. He used to think of it as a funny episode, a collision of Camelot's cocaine kid and America's foremost opponent of illegal drug use. But Kennedy took his last hit of anything in 2009, and he's since honed an anti-drug message that sounds a bit like Reagan with a Boston brogue.

Kennedy believes there is ''an epidemic in this country of epic dimensions when it comes to alcohol and drugs. He'd like to treat it all, but he's convinced that the single biggest threat to America's mental health is free-market marijuana. So even as Democrats favor the legalization of pot—by a 34-point margin, according to the latest WSJ/NBC News poll—the scion of America's most famous Democratic family has broken ranks, criticized the White House, and aligned with the likes of Newt Gingrich to warn voters against trying to tax and regulate today's psychoactive chlorophyll.

''I don't think the American public has any clue about this stuff,'' says Kennedy, after welcoming guests with a choice of Gatorade or bottled water.

The ''stuff'' in question is modern marijuana, of course, which gets pumped into snack foods and candies, and carries more THC (tetrahydrocannabinol, the chemical that gets you high) than the ditch weed used by the hippie generation. Kennedy calls legalization ''a public health nightmare because he believes it will warm more people to a dangerous drug, and lead inevitably to ''Big Marijuana,'' a blood-sucking vice industry dependent on converting kids and selling to heavy users—same as the tobacco and alcohol industries.

''The science tells the story,'' he says, breaking into an attack on the idea that marijuana is safer than alcohol. He ticks through studies showing that smoked marijuana is ''associated with'' or ''linked to'' IQ loss, psychosis, and self-reported dissatisfaction with life. ''It takes you to the same place as cocaine or heroin,'' he often adds. ''It just takes longer.''

''Incarceration is a powerful motivator,'' says Kennedy, who after a prescription drug-addled crash in 2006 spent a year urinating in front of a probation officer three times a week.

Last January Kennedy went public with his beliefs, launching Smart Approaches to Marijuana, or Project SAM, a campaign to keep marijuana illegal and address the failings of the drug war through other means. But what other means? Kennedy has sometimes been vague, promising ''a fresh approach that neither legalizes, nor demonizes marijuana,'' but never quite clarifying what makes him different from Reagan-era prohibitionists.

Not anymore. In a series of interviews, Kennedy and his cofounder Kevin Sabet—a former senior advisor to the Obama administration on drug policy—previewed SAM's aggressive new posture for 2014. It's not a new War on Pot, but it might be the most potent campaign since Nancy Reagan made marijuana the centerpiece of her ''Just say no'' tour three decades ago.

As Kennedy and Sabet cut a path between the poles of legalization and prohibition, they seem to list toward the status quo. They would make the simple possession of marijuana a civil infraction, like jaywalking, which could take 750,000 annual marijuana arrests down to zero, and alleviate the disproportionate burden that prohibition puts on people who are nonwhite and poor.

But instead of handcuffs, Kennedy and Sabet propose a mandatory screening for marijuana addiction, according to the ''Legal Reform'' section of their website. That could lead to ''marijuana education,'' and ultimately a year in a ''probation program to prevent further drug use.'' And if the pot smoker still insists on getting high? It's handcuffs time.

''Incarceration is a powerful motivator,'' says Kennedy, who after a prescription drug-related car crash in 2006 spent a year urinating in front of a probation officer three times a week. He faced a jail term if he relapsed. ''That does it for a lot of people,'' he added. ''That's the turning point: hearing that judge say treatment or jail.''

''I think Madison Avenue has proven that it can get around more rules and be more ruthless than any Mexican drug cartel,'' adds Sabet.

Kennedy and Sabet can also sound old-school on medical marijuana. As a member of Congress, Kennedy voted in favor of allowing patients access to pot but now says he was wrong. He'd like to repeal every law that treats smoked marijuana as medicine. Instead he hopes to see pharmaceutical-grade cannabis satisfy an FDA approval process and sell as a patch or pill. ''We don't smoke opium for morphine,'' as Sabet explains, ''we don't need to smoke pot for medicine.''

SAM's opponents argue that legalizing weed would raise tax revenue, allow law enforcement to chase more serious crime, and undercut Mexico's violent drug cartels. Kennedy and Sabet sharply dispute all this—and so much more—but they're particularly unapologetic about championing the continued existence of a black market. They say it's mostly nonviolent on the American side, and will create fewer public health problems than allowing advertisers to flog for Big Marijuana.

''There is no way to minimize the greed and profit motive in promoting a dangerous substance,'' says Kennedy. When it comes to pushing a product, adds Sabet, ''I think Madison Avenue has proven that it can get around more rules and be more ruthless than any Mexican drug cartel.'' He calls the black market, ''better than having Joe Pot, heir to Joe Camel, on a bus-stop where I'm going to be hanging out with my kids before school.''

When Project SAM launched, opponents mocked the effort as foolhardy, and they had a point. Voters had just legalized marijuana by a landslide in Colorado and Washington. Polls showed that a majority of Americans supported doing the same nationwide, and Kennedy could do little at first but appear on TV as the token voice of dissent.

Now, however, SAM is poised to launch a serious counter-offensive. It began this month with a billboard outside the Super Bowl.''Marijuana kills your drive,'' read the carefully-calibrated text, which picked up national coverage, spreading on a tide of the opposition's howls and guffaws.

It was crafted by Sabet, a 34-year-old prodigy of drug politics, who launched his first anti-drug campaign (Citizens for a Drug-Free Berkeley) while in college and is now, in the opinion of Rolling Stone, the number one national ''enemy of legalization.''

''Yep,'' he emailed after the ad launched. ''Game on.''

''My name is John and marijuana ruined my life,'' begins one entry from a young man who says that marijuana took ''the gifts and potential I was born with.''

The game continues this spring, with SAM planning a response to ''We Are the Marijuana Majority,'' a web compendium of legalization's best and most famous friends, launched with a grant from the Drug Policy Alliance, a leading advocate for reform. The SAM answer will be a directory of—you guessed it—the anti-marijuana majority.

The precise URL and title is still under discussion, but the webpage will feature opponents of legalization, an infinite scroll of head shots and quotes from the likes of Tina Brown, David Brooks, and Barack Obama (whose tangled statements on the subject appear to have landed him on both sites at once).

SAM's second website will take aim at Colorado and Washington, the world's first state-approved markets for marijuana, and to Kennedy and Sabet a slowly unfolding disaster that will prove them right in the end. The Justice Department has said it will shut down the state experiments if the regulations fail or public health falters, which is why SAM will use this site to track every known example of pot gone wrong.

The third website is tentatively titled ''The Other Side of Marijuana'' and it will collect stories from people who believe marijuana damaged their lives. It's a counterpoint to the notion that marijuana is a safe, non-addictive substance. Based on a sample of entries, it's also likely to draw more fire than anything SAM has done yet.

''My name is John and marijuana ruined my life,'' begins one note from a young man who says that marijuana took ''the gifts and potential I was born with.'' ''Most of my daughter's former friends are in jail or

dead,'' adds the mother of an 18-year-old in residential treatment for marijuana addiction. She is ''sickened'' by the idea that marijuana will be the next big business in America.

In another note a therapist quits her practice in despair after a rise in marijuana-related patients. ''I witnessed first-hand too many of the problems,'' she writes, ticking off ''anxiety, depression, irritability and psychosis.''

''This is the stuff of life,'' Kennedy says, trying to explain his passion for drug policy, ''so you bet I'm emotional about it.''

Not every pot smoker goes crazy or brainless, as Kennedy admits, but SAM is about minimizing the risk to those who—like him—start drugs young and are predisposed to break bad for life. After he got married in 2011, in his early 40s, he moved to his wife's hometown of Atlantic City, N.J. Now he is the father of three kids under 5 (one is a step-child), and he worries they will inherit his addictions. He can also see the casinos from his backyard.

''The appetite for Americans to lose themselves is just . . . '' Kennedy shakes his head and seems too pained to finish the thought. His six-week-old daughter was fussy the night before, and it was his turn to shush and pace. In the hallway, near a stairway to where his 20-month-old son is napping, there's a toy fire engine and Kennedy's eyes return to it again and again. Suddenly, he seems to be on the brink of tears.

''This is the stuff of life,'' he says, trying to explain his passion for drug policy, ''so you bet I'm emotional about it.''

The rollout of the new SAM continued this month at a conference in Washington, D.C., where Kennedy and Sabet held a standing-room-only rally for supporters. They celebrated 25,000 media mentions, and 22 states with SAM affiliates. They aired footage of Kennedy telling CNN's Sanjay Gupta that his ballyhooed endorsement of marijuana was ''shameful,'' a ratings ploy that ''history will not remember well.''

So far, however, the legalization side seems to have an edge in the war of ridicule. They charge Kennedy and Sabet with 21 st century reefer madness, which the duo bats away as a sign that the opposition is afraid to engage with the facts. But while they can sometimes be unpopular at parties, they keep going, fueled by those letters from the public, and enthusiastic notes from past drug advisors.

''SAM is doing what no one else has done and doing a darn good job of it,'' wrote Robert DuPont, Richard Nixon's head of drug control, in a recent email to Sabet. ''Absolutely brilliant presentation,'' Clinton-era drug czar Barry McCaffrey added in a different note.

In a sense, nothing has changed since a teenage Kennedy gave President Reagan a sly smile. To make the world a healthier place, the anti-drug crowd wants to protect people from their most dangerous appetites. The reform side supports the same vision of health but wants to make drug use itself safer, believing that insobriety is normal and indulgence inevitable.

Neither side appears to be winning, because there's no such thing as an ''objective'' position on marijuana policy. Would legalization really be so bad? Or is it the panacea its proponents claim? The honest answer is: nobody knows for sure, because no modern nation has ever tried legalization before—until now.

''Life isn't really in our control,'' says Kennedy, as another sober day fades to night. ''There's a mover in the universe, a higher power, so to speak, and we can't imagine what we're going to find in our universe if we let go and just let God lead us.''

WORLD WILDLIFE DAY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, in commemoration of World Wildlife Day on March 3, I rise to bring attention to the catastrophic effects of wildlife trafficking on global and economic security and the urgent need to crush this demand for these illegal products.

Conserving natural resources is a priority for me, particularly as chair of the Water and Wildlife Subcommittee; it is a priority for my State of Maryland, and it is a priority for this administration. But the responsibility of protecting natural resources, such as wildlife, doesn't just sit with one State or one country. It requires a coordinated, global effort. Wildlife trafficking is a multibillion-dollar-per-year, transnational, sophisticated network of organized criminals. As the demand for elephant ivory, rhino horns, and other wildlife products resurges, the trade has become an illicit business similar to drug and arms smuggling. And as such, we must approach the problem with an equally hard-hitting strategy.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, CITES, reports that in 2012, an estimated 22,000 elephants were slaughtered across Africa. According to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, approximately 2,800 rhinos have been poached in South Africa since 2008, a more than 7,000-percent increase compared to the previous 17 years, mostly destined for Asian countries. Hundreds of park rangers are being gunned down by poachers, leaving behind devastated families with no income. Illegal wildlife trafficking threatens our species and is pushing some to the edge of extinction. The illicit trade hurts developing communities, damages tourism, risks people's livelihood or worse, ends lives.

In February, President Obama released the first-ever National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking. I joined colleagues on both sides of the aisle to urge the administration to produce a bold, goal-oriented, and whole-of-government approach to combat this growing problem of illicit wildlife trafficking. I commend the administration for its aggressive plan, and I hope we see swift implementation in the three areas of enforcement, demand reduction, and partner-building.

The image of wildlife trafficking is often tied to the African Continent. But the other side—the consumer-demand side, primarily driven in Asia—must be viewed closely as well. With growing wealth in the Asia region, wildlife is being used for traditional and nontraditional medicines, trophies, clothing or pets. As the demand grows, the price of these products continues to skyrocket. We must leverage our bilateral and regional relationships to educate communities about the real effects of this trade.

As chair of the Subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific, I am particularly pleased to see the tremendous cooperation between the United States and China on this issue. At the 2013 Strategic and Economic Dialogue, the two countries committed to cooperate on enforcement issues and efforts to end the supply and demand for such products. On January 6, China destroyed more than 5 tons of ivory, publicly demonstrating their commitment to protecting elephant populations. The United States, Kenya, Gabon, and the Philippines have held similar events. In a joint 1-month global operation earlier this year, the United States and China joined with 26 countries, plus international organizations such as ASEAN, to target wildlife trafficking criminals resulting in over 400 arrests and more than 350 major wildlife seizures. This type of collaboration is critical and more needs to be done.

At the London Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade February 12–13, 2014, representatives from over 40 countries joined together and issued a declaration urging action. There is no doubt that governments recognize the urgency in solving this problem. But we need to build on this momentum, match our words with action, ensure developing countries have the capacity to address enforcement issues, hold criminals accountable, and educate communities to look beyond short-term benefits toward the dangerous long-term effects of illegal trafficking.

I urge all my colleagues to work together to strengthen existing laws, adopt new laws, and pressure consumers to put an end to this damaging trade before the illegal trade puts an end to our world's most precious wildlife.

SOUTH BERWICK, MAINE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President. I wish to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the town of South Berwick, ME. South Berwick holds a very special place in our State's history, and one that exemplifies the determination and resiliency of Maine people.

While this landmark anniversary marks South Berwick's incorporation, the year 1814 was but one milestone in a long journey of progress. It is a journey that began thousands of years earlier with Native American villages on the banks of the Piscataqua and Salmon Falls rivers. In 1631, barely a decade after the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, Ambrose Gibbens established a settlement at the falls and built the first sawmill in North America. A manufacturing heritage of textile mills and iron works that developed in the 18th century continues today. The skills and work ethic of the people of South Berwick contribute greatly to the cutting-edge industries in the region, from biotechnology to aerospace and defense.

Industry is only part of South Berwick's story. In 1791, the citizens of the region recognized the importance of education and established Berwick Academy with a charter signed by Massachusetts Governor John Hancock.

Located in South Berwick, the academy is the oldest educational institution in Maine and now, as a private school, remains true to its founding purpose of promoting ''virtue and useful knowledge among the rising generation.'' In addition, the people of South Berwick remain true to the vision of their forebears by supporting an outstanding public school system.

During the Revolutionary War, the growing community provided two full companies to fight for America's independence, more than many towns of greater size. The courage and character demonstrated by the townspeople in standing for liberty echo throughout South Berwick's history. In the years before the Civil War, the many churches in the community were powerful voices for the abolition of slavery. During that terrible conflict, more than 294 of South Berwick's young men, including 46 Berwick Academy students fought, and many died, so that all might live in freedom. The town's honor roll of current military personnel demonstrates an ongoing commitment to our Nation's founding principles.

This anniversary is not just about something that is measured in calendar years. It is about human accomplishment. We celebrate the people who, through the centuries, have pulled together, cared for one another, and built a great community that is a wonderful place to live, work, and raise families. Thanks to those who came before, South Berwick has a wonderful history. Thanks to those who are there today, it has a bright future.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

AMERICAN RED CROSS MONTH

• Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to the American Red Cross. March is American Red Cross Month—this is a special time to recognize and thank our everyday heroes. The Red Cross is on the frontlines every day. They volunteer their time, take lifesaving courses, and provide financial donations to help those in need.

We would like to remember our heroes in Alaska who help those in need. The Red Cross works tirelessly to help in times of disaster with the comfort of a helping hand. They provide round-the-clock support to members of the military, veterans and their families, and teach lifesaving classes in CPR and first aid.

Across the country and around the world, the American Red Cross responds to fires, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods and wildfires—the tragedy at the Boston Marathon, and Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. When an injured servicemember enters a hospital far from home, the American Red Cross offers comfort. When a hospital's patients need blood, the American Red Cross blood donors make that happen.

We dedicate the month of March to all those who support the American Red Cross mission to prevent and alleviate human suffering in the face of emergencies. Our community depends on the American Red Cross, which relies on donations of time and money to fulfill its humanitarian mission. The American Red Cross reflects all that is right with mankind. They make America stronger by their selfless service.•

TRIBUTE TO SISTER LILLIAN MURPHY

• Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Sister Lillian Murphy, who is retiring this June after an astounding 27 years as the CEO of Denver-based Mercy Housing, one of the largest and most effective affordable housing organizations in the country.

Since 1982, Mercy Housing has worked tirelessly to develop affordable housing options in more than 40 States. Sister Lillian took over as CEO in 1987 and has overseen enormous growth in Mercy's operations, which now houses more than 135,000 residents in nearly 40,000 homes.

Sister Lillian has won a number of awards for her work, including the prestigious Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California's Affordable Housing Leadership Award for Lifetime Achievement, and the Annual Housing Leadership Award from the National Low Income Housing Coalition. In 2009, she was inducted into the Affordable Housing Hall of Fame by Affordable Housing Finance Magazine. Sister Lillian has been a remarkable leader at Mercy Housing and she will be sorely missed.

Sister Lillian is leaving the important work of Mercy Housing in very capable hands with the incoming CEO Jane Graf. We all look forward to working with Ms. Graf to ensure that middle- and low-income families continue to have access to quality, affordable housing.•

REMEMBERING TOM GOLA

• Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to the exceptional life of Tom Gola, a Philadelphia basketball legend, who passed away on January 26, 2014.

Mr. Gola was born on January 13, 1933, to Ike and Helen Gola in Philadelphia, PA. His passion for basketball developed early in life and he became a star while playing for La Salle College High School. While there, he led his team to the Philadelphia Catholic League Championship and won the Markward Award as the league's top player.

As one of the most celebrated high school athletes at the time, many expected Mr. Gola to attend one of the big basketball schools in the country. Instead, he decided to stay close to home in Pennsylvania to attend La Salle University, where he once again quickly distinguished himself as a star player. In 1952, he led La Salle to a NIT championship, earning the championship's Most Valuable Player Award in the process. Two years later, he led the team to its first and only NCAA championship, alain earning the honor of tournament MVP. Mr. Gola continued his exceptional collegiate basketball career with: a second place finish in the 1955 NCAA tournament; Player of the Year Awards in 1954 and 1955; a place on three consecutive first-team all-American squads, and; achieving the NCAA record of 2,201 career rebounds, a record which stands today.

The familiar cheer of ''Go, Gola! Go!'' still echoes in the memories of Philadelphia sports fans of a certain age. Another Philadelphia sports legend, the great Wilt Chamberlain once said:

> Growing up, you whispered the name of Tom Gola. He was like a saint.

Following his extraordinary college career, Mr. Gola entered the NBA in 1955 to join his hometown team, the Philadelphia Warriors. He helped the Warriors win an NBA Championship the following year. He is one of only two players who played on NIT, NCAA and NBA championship teams. A five-time NBA All-Star, Mr. Gola was enshrined into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 1976.

Following his retirement from the NBA, Mr. Gola focused his considerable talents on hi community. He was elected to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and later served as the city of Philadelphia's Controller.

Mr. Gola also returned to his alma mater as the head coach of the La Salle Explorers for two seasons. Today, the university's multipurpose arena bears his name as a testament to the indelible mark he left on the school.

I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Tom Gola for his remarkable achievements in basketball and his service to Pennsylvania. My thoughts and pray are with his wife Caroline and his son Thomas as they mourn his loss. May he rest in peace.•

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the President of the United States submitting a nomination which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

(The message received today is printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13288 ON MARCH 6, 2003, WITH RESPECT TO THE ACTIONS AND POLICIES OF CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE AND OTHER PERSONS TO UNDERMINE ZIMBABWE'S DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES OR INSTITUTIONS, AS RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE ON FEBRUARY 28, 2014—PM 31

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003, with respect to the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2014.

The threat constituted by the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions has not been resolved. These actions and policies continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue this national emergency and to maintain in force the sanctions to respond to this threat.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *February 28, 2014.*

BUDGET OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015—PM 32

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred jointly, pursuant to the order of January 30, 1975 as modified by the order of April 11, 1986; to the Committees on Appropriations; and the Budget:

THE BUDGET MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT

To the Congress of the United States:

After 5 years of grit and determined effort, the United States is better positioned for the 21st Century than any other nation on Earth. We have created more than 8 million new jobs in the last 4 years and now have the lowest unemployment rate in over 5 years. Our housing market is rebounding. Our manufacturing sector is adding jobs for the first time since the 1990s. We now produce more oil at home than we buy from the rest of the world. We have cut our deficits by more than half since I took office. And for the first time in over a decade, business leaders around the world have declared that China is no longer the world's number one place to invest; America is.

We have made great progress, but we must do more to rebuild our economy on a new foundation for growth and prosperity. I believe that what unites the people of this Nation, regardless of race or region or party, young or old, rich or poor, is the simple, profound belief in opportunity for all—the notion that if you work hard and take responsibility, you can get ahead. That belief has suffered some serious blows. Over more than three decades, even before the Great Recession hit, massive shifts in technology and global competition had eliminated good, middle class jobs and weakened the economic foundations that families depend on.

Today, after 4 years of economic growth, corporate profits and stock prices have rarely been higher, and those at the top have never done better. But average wages have barely budged. Inequality has deepened. Upward mobility remains stalled. Even in the midst of recovery, too many Americans are working more than ever just to get by—let alone get ahead. And too many still are not working at all.

Our job is to reverse these trends. We need to return to an America where our success depends not on accident of birth, but on the strength of our work ethic and the scope of our dreams. That is what drew our forebears here. Opportunity is who we are. And the defining project of our generation is to restore that promise. It will not happen right away. But we must continue to strive toward that goal.

What I offer in this Budget is a set of concrete, practical proposals to speed up growth, strengthen the middle class, and build new ladders of opportunity into the middle class—all while continuing to improve the Nation's long-run fiscal position.

Earlier this year, thanks to the work of Democrats and Republicans, the Congress produced an agreement that undid some of last year's severe cuts to priorities like education and research, infrastructure, and national security. Recognizing the importance of that bipartisan compromise, the Budget adheres to the spending levels agreed to by the Congress for fiscal year 2015. But there is clearly much more we can and should do to invest in areas like infrastructure, innovation, and education that will create jobs, economic growth, and opportunity. So I am including in my Budget a fully paid for Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative that provides the Congress a roadmap for how and where additional investments should be made in both domestic priorities and national security this year.

We know where to start: the best measure of opportunity is access to a good job. With the economy picking up speed, companies say they intend to hire more people this year. And over half of big manufacturers say they are thinking of insourcing jobs from abroad.

We need to make that decision easier for more companies. Both Democrats and Republicans have argued that our tax code is riddled with wasteful, complicated loopholes that make it harder to invest here and encourage companies to keep profits abroad. Last summer, I offered a proposal to couple business tax reform with critical investments in infrastructure. This Budget includes that proposal, using the transition revenue that will result from a shift to a simpler, more efficient tax code to create jobs rebuilding our roads and bridges and unclogging our commutes and transporting goods made in America—because in today's global economy, first-class jobs gravitate to first-class infrastructure. At the same time, this Budget lays out how my Administration will continue to act on our own to cut red tape and streamline the permitting process for key infrastructure projects, so we can get more construction workers on the job as fast as possible.

We also have the chance, right now, to beat other countries in the race for the next wave of high-tech manufacturing jobs. My Administration has already launched four hubs for high-tech manufacturing, where we have connected businesses to research universities that can help America lead the world in advanced technologies. The Budget expands on these efforts by providing funding for five additional institutes, and, through the Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative, supports the goal I announced last summer of creating a national network of 45 of these manufacturing innovation institutes over the next 10 years.

We know that the nation that goes all-in on innovation today will own the global economy tomorrow. This is an edge America cannot surrender. That is why the Budget includes investments in cutting-edge research and development, driving scientific and technological breakthroughs that will create jobs, improve lives, and open new opportunities for the American people. The Budget's Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative will allow us to push our limits even further, supporting additional biomedical research at the National Institutes of Health that will help us fight Alzheimer's, cancer, and other diseases, climate research to develop climate change-resilient infrastructure, and agricultural research that will help increase agricultural productivity and improve health.

We also know that one of the biggest factors in bringing more jobs back is our commitment to American energy. The all-of-the-above energy strategy I announced a few years ago is working, and today, America is closer to energy independence than we have been in decades.

The Budget advances this strategy by ensuring the safe and responsible production of natural gas and cleaner electricity generation from fossil fuels. It creates new incentives to cut the amount of energy we waste in our cars, trucks, homes, and factories. It promotes clean energy with investments in technologies like solar and by expanding and making permanent the tax credit for the production of renewable energy. And it continues to strengthen protection of our air, water, land, and communities, and addresses the threat of climate change. Climate change is a fact, and we have to act with more urgency to address it because a changing climate is already harming western communities struggling with drought and coastal cities dealing with floods. That is why I directed my Administration to work with States, utilities, and others to set new standards on the amount of carbon pollution our power plants are allowed to dump into the air, and why this Budget advances new approaches to address the growing cost and damage from wildfires.

All of these efforts can speed up growth and create more jobs. But in this rapidly changing economy, we have to make sure that every American has the skills to fill those jobs. The Budget therefore invests in new efforts to drive greater performance and innovation in workforce training, including on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and other steps to equip workers with skills that match the needs of employers.

Of course, it is not enough to train today's workforce. We also have to prepare tomorrow's workforce by guaranteeing every child access to a world-class education. That is why the Budget builds on the progress we have made with new investments and initiatives to improve all levels of education, from early childhood through college.

Research shows that one of the best investments we can make in a child's life is high-quality early education. This year, we will invest in new partnerships with States and communities across the country to expand access to high-quality early education, and I am again calling on the Congress to make high-quality preschool available to every four-year-old child. The Budget also includes funding to provide access to high-quality infant and toddler care for more than 100,000 children, and supports the extension and expansion of voluntary home visiting programs.

Last year, I called on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to connect 99 percent of our students to high-speed broadband over the next 4 years. This year, the FCC is making a down payment on this goal by connecting more than 15,000 schools and 20 million students over the next 2 years, without adding a dime to the deficit. To ensure students receive the full benefit of this connectivity, the Budget invests in training for teachers in hundreds of school districts across the country.

The Budget also supports redesigning our high schools, helping them partner with colleges and employers that offer the college-level coursework and real-world skills to prepare students for college and careers. And it launches a new Race to the Top competition aimed at closing the achievement gap, so that all children get the high-quality education they need to succeed.

And we are shaking up our system of higher education to encourage innovation, give parents more information, and reward colleges for improving quality and reducing costs, so that no middle class student is priced out of a college education. Last summer, I directed the Department of Education to develop and publish a new college rating system that will identify colleges that provide the best value to students and encourage all colleges to improve. The Budget supports the development of that rating system and provides bonuses to reward colleges that improve educational outcomes for Pell Grant recipients. And to help more Americans who feel trapped by student loan debt, the Budget expands income-driven repayment options, allowing millions the opportunity to cap their monthly student loan payments at 10 percent of their income.

We also must do more to ensure our economy honors the dignity of work, and that hard work pays off for all of our citizens. Americans overwhelmingly agree that no one who works full time should ever have to raise a family in poverty. I have already acted by Executive Order to require Federal contractors to pay their federally funded employees a fair wage of at least $10.10 an hour. The Congress needs to go further and raise the minimum wage for all workers to that same amount. This raise will help families, and it will help the economy by giving businesses customers with more money to spend and by boosting productivity and reducing turnover. The Budget also invests in enforcement efforts to make sure workers receive the wages and overtime they have earned.

There are other steps we can take to help families make ends meet. Few policies are more effective at reducing inequality and helping families pull themselves up through hard work than the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The EITC for families with children lifts millions out of poverty each year and helps about half of all parents at some point in their lives. But as a number of prominent policymakers, both progressive and conservative, have noted, the EITC does not do enough for single workers who do not have kids. The Budget doubles the value of the EITC for workers without children and non-custodial parents, and also makes it available to younger adult workers, so that it can encourage work in the crucial years at the beginning of a young person's career.

We also need to do more to help Americans save for retirement. Today, most workers do not have a pension. A Social Security check often is not enough on its own. And while the stock market has doubled over the last 5 years, that does not improve retirement security for people who do not have retirement savings. That is why the Budget builds on my proposal to create a new way for working Americans to start saving for retirement: the MyRA savings bond. To encourage new savers, MyRA requires a low initial contribution and guarantees a decent return with no risk of losing what you put in. Separately, the Budget also proposes to establish automatic enrollment Individual Retirement Accounts, offering every American access to an automatic savings vehicle on the job.

For decades, few things exposed hard-working families to economic hardship more than a broken health care system. With the enactment of the Affordable Care Act, we are in the process of fixing that. Already, because of the health reform law, more than 3 million Americans under the age of 26 have gained coverage under their parents' plans. More than 9 million Americans have signed up for private health insurance or Medicaid coverage. Because of this law, no American can ever again be dropped or denied coverage for a preexisting condition like asthma, back pain, or cancer. No woman can ever be charged more just because she is a woman. And we did all this while adding years to Medicare's finances, keeping Medicare premiums flat, and lowering prescription costs for millions of seniors. To continue this progress, the Budget fully funds the ongoing implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

We must always remember that economic growth and opportunity can only be achieved if America is safe and secure. At home, the Budget supports efforts to make our communities safer by reducing gun violence and reforming our criminal justice system.

Looking beyond our borders, the Budget responsibly transitions from the completion of our military mission in Afghanistan in 2014 to political and security support for a unified Afghan government as it takes full responsibility for its own future. When I took office, nearly 180,000 Americans were serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, all our troops are out of Iraq and more than 60,000 of our troops have already come home from Afghanistan. With Afghan forces now in the lead for their own security, our troops have moved to a support role. Together with our allies, we will complete our mission there by the end of this year, and America's longest war will finally be over.

In addition to responsibly winding down our operations in Afghanistan,

the Budget ensures we maintain ready, modern, and capable defense forces to address any threats we might face, including threats from terrorism and cyber attacks. It funds humanitarian and diplomatic efforts in Syria, supports transition and reform throughout the Middle East and North Africa, and advances our strategic rebalancing toward the Asia-Pacific region. It enhances stability and creates new markets for U.S. businesses with investments in Power Africa and promotes peace and security by supporting global health care and addressing climate change. And it strengthens oversight of intelligence activities and enhances the protection of U.S. diplomatic facilities and personnel overseas.

The Budget also ensures that we continue to meet our obligations to our troops and veterans who have given so much to our country. To deliver on this commitment, it provides significant resources to support veterans' medical care, help military families, assist soldiers transitioning to civilian life, reduce veterans' homelessness, and reduce the disability claims backlog so our veterans receive the benefits they have earned. It also introduces necessary reforms to our military compensation system, which our uniform military leadership called for, to ensure servicemembers and their families receive the benefits that they have earned while making sure that our military can invest in the training, equipment, and support that it needs.

In addition to making these critical investments, the Budget outlines the steps my Administration is taking to create a 21st Century Government that is more efficient, effective, and supportive of economic growth. Our citizens and businesses expect their Government to provide the same level of service experienced in the private sector and we intend to deliver. The Budget includes initiatives that will lead to better, faster, and smarter services, both online and in-person. It calls on Federal agencies to share services and leverage the buying power of the Government to bring greater value and efficiency for taxpayer dollars. It continues to open Government data and research for public and private sector use to spur innovation and job creation. And it invests in the Government's most important resource, its workers, ensuring that we can attract and retain the best talent in the Federal workforce and foster a culture of excellence.

The Budget does all of these things while further strengthening the Nation's long-term fiscal outlook. Over the last 5 years, we have cut the deficit in half as a share of the economy, experiencing the fastest period of deficit reduction since the demobilization following World War II. The Budget continues this progress, bringing deficits down as a share of the economy to below 2 percent by 2023 and putting debt as a share of the economy on a declining path.

Although we have seen a notable and significant decline in health care spending growth over the last few years, in part due to the Affordable Care Act, we know that over the long run, the growth of health care costs continues to be our Nation's most pressing fiscal challenge. That is why the Budget builds on the savings and reforms in the health reform law with additional measures to strengthen Medicare and Medicaid and encourage high-quality and efficient health care.

We also know that revenue has to be part of the solution to our Nation's long-term fiscal challenges. Given the aging of our population and the declining ratio of workers to retirees, we will need additional revenue to maintain our commitments to seniors while also making the investments that are needed to grow our economy and expand opportunity. The Budget secures that revenue through tax reform that reduces inefficient and unfair tax breaks and ensures that everyone, from Main Street to Wall Street, is paying their fair share.

Finally, if we are serious about long-term, sustainable economic growth and deficit reduction, it is also time to heed the calls of business leaders, labor leaders, faith leaders, and law enforcement—and fix our broken immigration system. Independent economists say immigration reform will grow our economy and shrink our deficits by almost $1 trillion in the next two decades. And for good reason: when people come here to fulfill their dreams—to study, invent, and contribute to our culture—they make our country a more attractive place for businesses to locate and help create jobs for everyone. The Senate has acted to pass a bipartisan immigration reform bill that is worthy of support. It is time for the House of Representatives to finish the job.

We have made progress over the last 5 years. But our work is not done. This Budget provides a roadmap to ensuring middle class families and those working to be a part of the middle class can feel secure in their jobs, homes, and budgets. To build real, lasting economic security, we also need to expand opportunity for all so every American can get ahead and have a shot at creating a better life for their kids.

None of it is easy. America has never come easy. But if we work together, if we summon what is best in us, I know it is within our reach.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *March 4, 2014.*

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:03 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. 899. An act to provide for additional safeguards with respect to imposing Federal mandates, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2804. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to publish information about rules on the Internet, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3193. An act to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to strengthen the review authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council of regulations issued by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 899. An act to provide for additional safeguards with respect to imposing Federal mandates, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2804. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to publish information about rules on the Internet, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2077. A bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

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–4779. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fluxapyroxad; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9906–70) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4780. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Enhancement of Contractor Employee Whistleblower Protections'' ((RIN0750–AH97) (DFARS Case 2013–D010)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4781. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Disclosure to Litigation Support Contractors'' ((RIN0750–AH54) (DFARS Case 2012–D029)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4782. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Acquisitions in Support of Operations in Afghanistan'' ((RIN0750–AH98) (DFARS Case 2013–D009)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4783. A communication from the Acting General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Deputy Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4784. A communication from the Acting General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, (2) two reports relative to vacancies in the Department of Housing and Urban Development, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4785. A communication from the Assistant to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Prohibition Against Federal Assistance to Swaps Entities (Regulation KK)'' (RIN7100–AD96) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 21, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4786. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Suspension of Community Eligibility'' ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2013–0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4787. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Energy (Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy), transmitting, pursuant to law, the semi-annual Implementation Report on Energy Conservation Standards Activities of the Department of Energy; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–4788. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Fossil Energy, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report relative to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve for calendar year 2012; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–4789. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Idaho'' (FRL No. 9907–30–Region 10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4790. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of State Implementation Plans; Alaska; Anchorage Carbon Monoxide Limited Maintenance Plan and State Implementation Plan Revisions'' (FRL No. 9902–22–Region 10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4791. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Utah; Revisions to Utah Administrative Code and an Associated Plan Revision'' (FRL No. 9905–25–Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4792. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Wisconsin; Transportation Conformity Procedures'' (FRL No. 9907–08–Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4793. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Colorado; Revised Transportation Conformity Consultation Process'' (FRL No. 9905–67–Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4794. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; New York State Ozone Implementation Plan Revision'' (FRL No. 9907–02–Region 2) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4795. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Primary Drinking Water Regulations: Minor Corrections to the Revisions to the Total Coliform Rule'' (FRL No. 9906–89–OW) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4796. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutant Emissions: Group IV Polymers and Resins; Pesticide Active Ingredient Production; and Polyether Polyols Production'' (FRL No. 9906–34–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4797. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Medicare Determinations and Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amounts to Medicare Part B Premiums; Conforming Changes to Regulations'' (RIN0960–AH47) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4798. A joint communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Attorney General, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report relative to the Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Program for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4799. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel (OSS–2014–0228); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4800. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel (OSS–2014–0229); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4801. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Poplar Island, Maryland project; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4802. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Boston Harbor Navigation Improvement Project; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. CHAMBLISS):

S. 2075. A bill to prohibit a reduction in funding for the defense commissary system in fiscal year 2015 pending the report of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. WICKER):

S. 2076. A bill to amend the provisions of title 46, United States Code, related to the Board of Visitors to the United States Merchant Marine Academy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. REED:

S. 2077. A bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. REED):

S.J. Res. 32. A joint resolution providing for the reappointment of John W. McCarter as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S. Res. 369. A resolution to designate May 22, 2014 as ''United States Foreign Service Day'' in recognition of the men and women who have served, or are presently serving, in the Foreign Service of the United States, and to honor those in the Foreign Service who have given their lives in the line of duty; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 149

At the request of Mr. NELSON, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 149, a bill to provide effective criminal prosecutions for certain identity thefts, and for other purposes.

S. 255

At the request of Mr. WALSH, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 255, a bill to withdraw certain Federal

land and interests in that land from location, entry, and patent under the mining laws and disposition under the mineral and geothermal leasing laws.

S. 452

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 452, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reduce the incidence of diabetes among Medicare beneficiaries.

S. 462

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 462, a bill to enhance the strategic partnership between the United States and Israel.

S. 942

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 942, a bill to eliminate discrimination and promote women's health and economic security by ensuring reasonable workplace accommodations for workers whose ability to perform the functions of a job are limited by pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition.

S. 1014

At the request of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1014, a bill to reduce sports-related concussions in youth, and for other purposes.

S. 1067

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1067, a bill to establish within the Department of Education the Innovation Inspiration school grant program, and for other purposes.

S. 1174

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1174, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers.

S. 1181

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1181, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt certain stock of real estate investment trusts from the tax on foreign investments in United States real property interests, and for other purposes.

S. 1204

At the request of Mr. COBURN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1204, a bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to protect rights of conscience with regard to requirements for coverage of specific items and services, to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit certain abortion-related discrimination in governmental activities, and for other purposes.

S. 1251

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1251, a bill to establish programs with respect to childhood, adolescent, and young adult cancer.

S. 1349

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1349, a bill to enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities, boost small businesses, increase individual savings, and for other purposes.

S. 1456

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1456, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

S. 1733

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1733, a bill to stop exploitation through trafficking.

S. 1737

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1737, a bill to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage and to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend increased expensing limitations and the treatment of certain real property as section 179 property.

S. 1811

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1811, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to prohibit voice communications through mobile communication devices on commercial passenger flights.

S. 1817

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1817, a bill to require the Secretary to implement standards for short-term custody of individuals held in facilities of U.S. Customs and Border Protection and for other purposes.

S. 1828

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1828, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage.

S. 1875

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) were added as cosponsors of S. 1875, a bill to provide for wildfire suppression operations, and for other purposes.

S. 2000

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2000, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and improve Medicare payments for physicians and other professionals, and for other purposes.

S. 2013

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2013, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal of Senior Executive Service employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance, and for other purposes.

S. 2048

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2048, a bill to include New Zealand in the list of foreign states whose nationals are eligible for admission into the United States as E–1 and E–2 nonimmigrants if United States nationals are treated similarly by the Government of New Zealand.

S. 2066

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2066, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the intentional discrimination of a person or organization by an employee of the Internal Revenue Service.

S. 2067

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2067, a bill to prohibit the Department of the Treasury from assigning tax statuses to organizations based on their political beliefs and activities.

S. 2072

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2072, a bill to prohibit the Department of the Treasury from assigning tax statuses to organizations based on their political beliefs and activities.

S. 2073

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2073, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the intentional discrimination of a person or organization by an employee of the Internal Revenue Service.

S. 2074

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) were added as cosponsors of S. 2074, a bill to promote energy savings in residential buildings and industry, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 32

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr.

KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 32, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the need for investigation and prosecution of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, whether committed by officials of the Government of Syria, or members of other groups involved in civil war in Syria, and calling on the President to direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to use the voice and vote of the United States to immediately promote the establishment of a Syrian war crimes tribunal, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 357

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 357, a resolution expressing concern of undemocratic governance and the abuse of the rights of individuals in Ukraine.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 369—TO DESIGNATE MAY 22, 2014 AS ''UNITED STATES FOREIGN SERVICE DAY'' IN RECOGNITION OF THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE SERVED, OR ARE PRESENTLY SERVING, IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES, AND TO HONOR THOSE IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR LIVES IN THE LINE OF DUTY

Mr. MENENDEZ submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 369

Whereas the Foreign Service of the United States (referred to in this resolution as the ''Foreign Service'') was established through the passage of the Act entitled ''An Act For the reorganization and improvement of the Foreign Service of the United States, and for other purposes'' (43 Stat. 140, chapter 182, commonly known as the ''Rogers Act of 1924'') and is now celebrating its 90th anniversary;

Whereas the Rogers Act of 1924 established a career organization based on competitive examination and merit promotion;

Whereas, approximately 16,000 men and women of the Foreign Service are serving at home and abroad in 2014;

Whereas the diplomatic, consular, communications, trade, development, security, and numerous other functions these men and women perform constitute the first and most cost-effective instrument of our Nation to protect and promote United States interests abroad;

Whereas the men and women of the Foreign Service and their families are increasingly exposed to risks and danger, even in times of peace, and many have died in the service of their country;

Whereas employees of the Foreign Service work daily—

(1) to preserve peace and freedom around the world;

(2) to promote economic prosperity and mutual understanding around the world;

(3) to reduce poverty, end hunger and malnutrition, fight disease, combat international crime and illegal drugs, and address environmental degradation;

(4) to promote economic development, commercial enterprises, economic prosperity, global food security, American agricultural products, and United States jobs and trade;

(5) to promote American ideals and values, human rights, freedom, gender equality, and democracy; and

(6) to provide emergency and humanitarian assistance to respond to crises around the globe;

Whereas employees of the Foreign Service are often the first line of defense against international terrorism;

Whereas more than 250 members of the Foreign Service, and many more locally employed staff of the Foreign Service, have made the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of the United States;

Whereas employees of the Foreign Service personify the virtues of patriotism, sacrifice, service, and duty;

Whereas the families of employees of the Foreign Service make important and significant sacrifices for the greater good of the American people and the United States; and

Whereas it is appropriate and just for our Nation—

(1) to recognize the dedication of the men and women of the Foreign Service; and

(2) to honor those who have given their lives in the loyal pursuit of their duties and responsibilities representing the interests of the United States and its citizens:

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors the men and women who have served, or are presently serving, in the Foreign Service for their dedicated and important service to country;

(2) calls on the people of the United States to reflect on the service and sacrifice of past, present, and future employees of the Foreign Service, wherever they serve, with appropriate ceremonies and activities; and

(3) designates May 22, 2014 as United States Foreign Service Day to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Foreign Service.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 4, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 4, 2014, at 3 p.m., to hold an East Asia and Pacific subcommittee hearing entitled, ''Strengthening U.S. Alliances in Northeast Asia.''

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

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2077

Mr. REID. Mr. President, S. 2077 is due for its first reading, I am told.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2077) to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. I ask for a second reading of this legislation but object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be read a second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 2014

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, March 5, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of Debo Adegbile under the previous order.

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

NOMINATION OF DEBO ADEGBILE

Mr. REID. Debo Adegbile is a fine man, and the fact that I don't pronounce his name very well takes nothing away from his credentials. He is a very outstanding individual. I will have more to say about him tomorrow.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. There will be up to three rollcall votes at 11:45 a.m. tomorrow. We expect to recess, following those votes, for the weekly caucus meetings and continue to work through nominations throughout the afternoon.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:14 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, March 5, 2014, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nomination received by the Senate:

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AND TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 44:

To be admiral

VICE ADM. PAUL F. ZUKUNFT

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN STRONG SUPPORT OF THE PRODUCTION TAX CREDIT AND INVESTMENT TAX CREDIT

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to echo the concerns of Americans across the country and call upon my colleagues in Congress to extend the Production Tax Credit (PTC) and Investment Tax Credit (ITC). Yet again, these essential tax credits have fallen victim to political jockeying and were allowed to expire at the end of 2013. If we are serious about meeting our renewable energy standards and, importantly, putting Americans back to work, then it is time to end this uncertainty and bring stability to a growing industry.

The PTC has encouraged nearly $20 billion in nationwide private investment annually over the last 5 years alone, while the ITC serves as the most fundamental federal tax incentive for offshore wind farms. As we promote investments that will reduce our dependence on foreign oil and serve as a central part in our fight against global warming and climate change, it is essential to remember the spillover of job creation and specialized expertise that will follow.

Support for the PTC and ITC is bipartisan—and vocal. It is well-understood that the voids we create with our inaction will not remain unfulfilled. They will be filled by foreign companies who will not be ''Making It in America.'' I find it to be nonsensical that investments in renewable energy continue to face an uphill battle.

At home, we have witnessed firsthand the critical economic development opportunities that renewable energy projects provide to States. Our region has undergone an economic regeneration with the promise of Cape Wind—slated to be the Nation's first offshore wind farm. From the Port of New Bedford, which will serve as the staging area for assembly, to the ferry captains who will provide eco-tours of offshore turbines, no sector of our community is left untouched.

Massachusetts is consistently recognized as one of the States for clean energy, particularly wind energy. 106MW of wind power is produced state-wide, powering over 32,000 homes. In my district alone, 23MW of wind energy is produced. These impressive figures do not account for the thousands more of potential wind power that exists offshore.

Support for a long-term extension is bipartisan and urgent. I call on my colleagues to join me in supporting an extension of these important incentives.

HONORING DELORES CHRISTINA BROWN OREY

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the late remarkable public servant, Mrs. Delores Christina Brown Orey, who was born on September 24, 1932 in Martinsville, MS (the eldest of five children) to the late Mr. Alpheus and Mrs. Ella Brown.

Mrs. Delores Christina Brown Orey attended Piney Woods School and graduated from Parish High School in Hazlehurst, MS; did further study at Tuskegee Institute; and received her BA degree in Elementary Education with a minor in Sociology from Jackson State College. She became concerned about the disparate treatment that she and other African American Mississippians received and joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People under the leadership of Dr. Aaron Henry.

She was very dedicated to the NAACP and served the organization in various capacities. She worked as Secretary in the NAACP State Office and also drove Dr. Henry around the State to investigate discrimination complaints. She was jailed for her unwavering activism and spied on by the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission.

During that time, she helped organize Voter Registration Drives and Boycotts. She invited Freedom Riders, both Black and White, to stay at her home even under the threat of violence and started a Freedom School at her church, Mt. Nebo. She attended and helped to organize many marches for Civil Rights alongside Medgar Wiley Evers, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr., to name a few. She also ran for the Mississippi House of Representatives, and unfortunately, her opponent was killed in an airplane crash. The Governor of record appointed a white male who had lost the race rather than following procedure for Mrs. Orey to assume the post. In her continuing quest for equality, Mrs. Orey children integrated the Jackson Public Schools.

Because of her activism on behalf of the poor and disenfranchised, she developed a special relationship with former President Jimmy Carter and was invited to represent Mississippi in his inaugural parade. She was a close confidant of former Governor Cliff Finch and this led to her son, Alfonso and his wife, Sadie, becoming the first Blacks to have an official wedding ceremony on the grounds of the Governor's Mansion. She was one of the first Head Start Directors for Mississippi Action for Progress and worked for the MS Council on Aging and was an AARP Volunteer. She loved children and served as NAACP State Youth Advisor for several terms. She mentored many young people among them our immediate past NAACP National President, Benjamin Todd Jealous, and our current Mississippi State Conference President, Derrick Johnson. Mrs. Orey has been credited with maintaining the Jackson Branch NAACP through the years by serving in all capacities from President to Treasurer to Secretary. She received numerous honors and prestigious awards throughout her distinguished life.

Mrs. Orey enjoyed spending time with her loving family. They shared her passion for her advocacy. On numerous occasions they accompanied her to various activist events, especially her beloved national NAACP Conventions.

On January 8, 2014, Veteran Mississippi Civil Rights Worker and champion for social justice, Mrs. Delores Orey transitioned this life. She was a heroine who was truly loved by her family and friends and will be missed by all.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Delores Christina Brown Orey for her dedication to serving.

HONORING YOLANDA JORDAN, CALUMET DISTRICT'S SOCIAL WORKER OF THE YEAR

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the achievements of Ms. Yolanda Jordan on being named Calumet District's 2014 Social Worker of the Year.

Each year, the eight Illinois districts of the National Association of Social Workers select a member to receive the Social Worker of the Year award. Recipients of this award are individuals who embody the mission of the National Association of Social Workers, and who strive to help others while abiding to a strict code of ethics. These individuals have each made invaluable contributions to the people they help and the communities in which they work.

After more than 20 years of service in the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, it is clear that Ms. Yolanda Jordan was meant to receive this prestigious honor. Throughout her career, Yolanda has provided the people of Kankakee, Will, and Grundy counties with unparalleled social services. She has helped families and children navigate the complex child welfare system, and worked as a clinical practitioner, operating her own private practice.

Ms. Jordan, along with other Illinois social workers who received this award, will be honored during the month of March, which is National Social Work Month.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ms. Jordan's service to the members of the Calumet District, and to acknowledge the vital role social workers play in creating a healthy society.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize passage of several pieces of legislation during the week of February 24, 2014. Unfortunately, I was not able to vote for final passage of these bills because I was out on medical leave recovering from much needed hip replacement surgery.

H.R. 1211, the FOIA Oversight and Implementation Act of 2014, is important legislation that increases transparency and streamlines the process for requests of public information disclosures under the Freedom of Information Act. This legislation passed through one of my committees, the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, with my support.

H.R. 1123, the Unlocking Consumer Choice and Wireless Competition Act, is a bill that reverses a previous Library of Congress rule that made the unlocking of cell phones illegal after the FCC and industry had agreed that consumers had every right to unlock their phones. It also directs the Library of Congress to issue a rule to determine whether consumers should be allowed to unlock similar devices, such as tablets.

H.R. 1944, the Private Property Rights Protection Act, is a bill to remedy a Supreme Court decision, Kelo v. New London, regarding governments' eminent domain powers. This legislation is very similar to one passed in the 112th Congress, which passed by voice vote. I am a strong supporter of private property rights and I agree 100 percent with the sense of Congress stated in this legislation that it should be ''the policy of the United States to encourage, support, and promote the private ownership of property and to ensure that the constitutional and other legal rights of private property owners are protected by the federal government.''

H.R. 3865, the Stop Targeting of Political Beliefs by the IRS Act, is an incredibly important piece of legislation designed to prevent the IRS from adopting a proposed rule that changes the way 501(c)(4) organizations are allowed to operate under the tax code. As the Oversight Committee noted in its hearing this week, this rule is tantamount to ''doubling down'' on the discriminatory practices against conservative groups that were uncovered in 2013. I strongly support this bill.

H.R. 2804, the All Economic Regulations Are Transparent Act, is a bill that requires federal agencies to further disclose and report on much of their processes and rules. One of my favorite provisions of this bill is that agencies and Washington bureaucrats pushing forth new regulations have to assess and disclose the costs that their proposed rules will have on small businesses and the economy. If the rules are going to be made, they should have a sound basis and fully consider the economic impact. This bill accomplishes those goals and has my support.

H.R. 3193, the Consumer Financial Protection and Soundness Improvement Act, makes a series of changes to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to rein in much of its autocratic authority. It will replace the Director of CFPB with a five member independent commission; it makes CFPB subject to the regular authorization and appropriations process; it requires the CFPB to use the GS pay scale like other federal agencies; and it prohibits the CFPB from accessing or using personal financial data of a consumer without express permission. I support reining in the unchecked authorities of the CFPB and support this legislation.

H.R. 899, the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act, is a bill that, among other things, enhances the ability of the public to identify federal mandates that may impose additional costs to citizens, workers, businesses, as well as State, local, and tribal governments. I am a firm believer that the Federal Government must not crush the smaller guy with undue burdens and mandates. I strongly support this important legislation.

Had I been present for these votes, I would have voted in support of these three important bills with an ''aye'' vote on rollcall Nos. 63, 64, 67, 69, 78, 85 and 90.

COMMENDING SECRETARY KERRY'S NEW POLICY TO DENY VISAS TO PERPETRATORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the action taken by Secretary of State John Kerry and U.K. Foreign Secretary William Hague to deny visas to perpetrators of sexual violence in times of armed conflict. This announcement sends a clear signal to sexual offenders and enablers of sexual violence that the United States will not tolerate these depraved acts.

Secretaries Kerry and Hague were joined by the U.S. Ambassador-at-large for global women's issues, Catherine Russell; the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees and Migration, Anne Richard; and United Nations Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict Zanaib Bangura in announcing this policy and shining a light on the sensitive yet urgent topic of rape and sexual violence as a tool of war.

Since my days in the Massachusetts state legislature and then as District Attorney, I have been a staunch supporter for survivors and victims of sexual assault. I brought this passion to Washington, where I have been proud to support passage of legislation that would strengthen whistleblower protections for those who report sexual assaults in the military, and have consistently worked to protect essential programs that serve victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, including the Violence Against Women Act and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act. And, as co-chair of the Military Sexual Assault Prevention Caucus, I have worked to ensure that military service victims' rights are protected through access to legal assistance and expedited transfers from his or her attacker.

Secretary Kerry has exhibited commendable leadership on this issue, and I look forward to working with him, the State Department, the Department of Defense, and our global counterparts to end this culture of negligence that exists within our armed services and create a safe and transparent environment.

HONORING JOHNNIE CARR DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2014

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of continuing the 7th district's commitment to honoring influential African Americans that were sons and daughters of Alabama. Today, it is my great privilege to pay homage to Mrs. Johnnie Carr, a heroine of the Civil Rights movement and a pioneer of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. In Alabama, this stalwart is referenced for her lifetime devotion to ensuring that America lived up to its ideals of freedom and equality for all.

This phenomenal woman was born on January 26, 1911 in Montgomery Alabama to John and Annie Daniels. She was educated at ''Miss White's Industrial School for Girls,'' a private institution devoted to educating young women of color. She went on to complete coursework in nursing before launching a public service career that would continue throughout her lifetime.

During the 1930s, Mrs. Carr found her calling as a foot soldier and started with a campaign to help raise funds for the defense of the Scottsboro Boys. This historic case involved nine black men who were falsely accused of raping two white women in 1931. During this time, she also became active in the NAACP and served as secretary and youth coordinator for the organization.

In 1964, Mrs. Carr and her husband, Arlam Carr also broke barriers in public education in Montgomery. The couple filed a suit against the Montgomery Board of Education in effort to allow their son to attend an all white high school. The monumental court case, Carr v. Montgomery County Board of Education, is referenced as a landmark decision that led to the desegregation of public schools in Montgomery, Alabama. Despite constant death threats the Carrs remained committed to the cause and eventually won the case on June 2, 1969. As a result, their son, Arlam Jr., was one of 13 black students to integrate Sydney Lanier High School.

In addition to their contribution to the integration of public schools, Mrs. Carr and her husband would also become pillars in efforts to desegregate the Montgomery bus system. In December of 1955, shortly after Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white passenger, the Carrs agreed to follow local buses in their personal vehicle to monitor the success of the demonstration. The couple also transported blacks that needed rides to work and provided an alternative to using the segregated bus system in Montgomery.

During the demonstration, Mrs. Carr was named president of the Montgomery Improvement Association in 1967. The organization was initially formed to oversee the bus boycotts but the entity would eventually play a huge role in ending segregation in the city of Montgomery. Mrs. Carr remained at the helm of the organization until her death in 2008. In 1984, Mrs. Carr joined ''One Montgomery'', an organization dedicated to improving race relations in Montgomery. Later in life, she became

a celebrated lecturer on her experiences during the civil rights movement.

Throughout her lifetime, Mrs. Carr's steadfast leadership broke barriers as she boldly tackled the injustices of her time. She was at the forefront of blazing trails for me and so many others. This amazing woman was dedicated to serving as a conduit for social change. Against insurmountable odds, she remained committed to her calling. Today, we honor this great woman of strength and reflect on the countless contributions she has made to the state of Alabama and this nation.

As a benefactor of Mrs. Carr's efforts, it is indeed an honor to share her story with our nation. As we reflect on all that she has given, let us commit to honoring her legacy by never forgetting her role in American history. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mrs. Johnnie Carr, an American hero.

HONORING ETHAN CALFEE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Ethan Calfee. Ethan is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 75, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Ethan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Ethan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Ethan has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Ethan Calfee for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING JOHNNY B. THOMAS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Johnny B. Thomas of Glendora, Mississippi. Mr. Thomas is also the Mayor of Glendora, March 16, 1982 to current.

Since this month is February, which is Black History month, and considering the historical journey Mr. Thomas has traveled, I felt he deserves to be honored. His present is tied to his history which is tied to an era, a place, and his parents.

Era: He was born November 30, 1953 in Glendora, MS at a time when the State of Mississippi was a segregated society. He got his early education on life as he traveled the dirt roads of Glendora, the plantations and cotton fields of Tallahatchie County and the juke joints.

In 1953 the United States was engaged in a discussion on ending segregation in schools. At the same time, Mississippi was making plans to prevent it, should it become a federal law. In 1954 the United States Supreme Court in Brown vs. Board of Education outlawed desegregation in schools. There were glaring disparities between Black and White communities. The Mississippi Sovereignty Commission was established in 1956. Disenfranchisement laws like Poll taxes and literacy tests were widespread across the State to keep Blacks from voting.

The Place: The County is Tallahatchie, also known as ''The Free State of Tallahatchie.'' The place is Glendora and the year is 1955. Glendora is a small rural town that has always maintained a very small population. It is also one of the places tied to moments in history which helped fuel the civil rights movement. The events were the August 28, 1955 murder of Emmett Louis Till, and the December 1955 murder of Mr. Clinton Melton and his wife, Beulah Melton in March 1956. Although he was still a child the effects of this would follow him the rest of his life. No longer was Glendora unknown after this; in fact overnight it became an international sensation, forever having its own grey cloud.

His Parents: Mr. Thomas was the second child of twelve born to Mr. Henry Lee Loggins and Ms. Adeline Hill. His parents were Mississippi sharecroppers. His mother worked in a juke joint called King Place. King Place became well known as it was tied to the Emmett Till murder as the place where reporters went to get information and answers about rumors of Blacks having been involved in the murder. His mother was that witness. He often worked in King Place to earn money as a young boy. His father, Henry Lee, worked as an overseer for J.W. Milam on his farm. J.W. Milam along with his brother, Roy Bryant, were the two white men charged with and acquitted of the murder of Emmett Louis Till. His father had to make a life altering decision after being accused of participating in the Emmett Till murder. After death threats on his life and his family, he decided to leave Glendora and go into hiding to protect the family. Mr. Thomas made it his life-long quest to clear his father's name.

His Present: He said he has an etched memory of the hardships of Black folk in the segregated south, the Glendora murders and how they affected his family. It was through those experiences and others that he gained the wisdom and passion for helping his people and ultimately led to him becoming a civil rights activist in Tallahatchie County. He never shied away from a challenge or ran from danger.

Mr. Thomas has been an entrepreneur, giving it up only to answer his calling to public service. In 1975 he became the first Black constable in Tallahatchie County. In 1982, he became the second Black Mayor of Glendora.

In 1985 he became the first Black elected County Supervisor. A strong countywide effort was launched against him as the first Black supervisor even though the district in which he won was eighty percent Black. The case was taken all the way to the Mississippi State Supreme Court within thirty days of being elected. The results were not in his favor as the Mississippi Supreme Court overturned the election result and Mr. Thomas was removed from office. The NAACP selected him to serve on the original Redistricting Committee on Voting in the County. The challenges he experienced and knowledge he gained made him take the stand as a plaintiff in several lawsuits opposing countywide redistricting plans in the years 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010.

As the Mayor of Glendora, he has established the Emmett Till Historic Intrepid Center (ETHIC) which is a state of the art Museum. He is also credited with the creation and incorporation of the Glendora Economic and Community Development Corporation. To his credit is also the Emmett Till Memorial Park and Nature Trail. This trail is located on the infamous Black Bayou which is the initial drop-off site of Emmett Till's body, according to his father, Henry Lee Loggins.

The Black Bayou is also the same body of water in which the drive-off and murder of Mrs. Beulah Melton took place. Mr. Thomas's vision for Glendora has expanded to now include the Glendora Sonny Boy Williamson Bed and Breakfast. Every year to address healthcare for citizens, he and the town host an annual Breast Cancer awareness and screening to provide free breast cancer screening to all citizens. This effort is made possible through Calvary Baptist Church of New York, NY and Partners in Development of Boston, MA.

Mr. Johnny B. Thomas, a man created by an era, a place, and events but made for today. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this member of Black History, Mr. Johnny B. Thomas, the honorable Mayor of Glendora from the Second Congressional District of Mississippi.

A COMMEMORATION OF USMC SGT. LANCE DAVISON

HON. ANN KIRKPATRICK

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, Lance Clinton Davison was born on January 8th, 1979, the first son of John and Desbah Davison. In Navajo tradition, Lance is of the Hashtl'ishnii Clan and born for Bilagaana.

Lance was raised in Flagstaff, Arizona, and graduated from Flagstaff High School in 1997. Upon graduation, Lance joined the U.S. Marine Corps, where he excelled and became an especially accomplished marksman and scout/sniper.

Immediately after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Lance was deployed to Afghanistan for duty with the 3rd Battalion, 23rd Marines, 1st Marine Division. During his combat service, he received several medals and commendations, including the Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

Like so many veterans, Lance not only served his country but came home and helped strengthen his own community. He became an officer with the Flagstaff Police Department and founded Raven2 O.D.G, a disabled veteran-owned business that provides enhanced training for SOCOM Operatives and agency professionals with precision marksmanship skills. Lance's dedication to his country and community was surpassed only by his dedication to and love for his son, Korben.

Lance was a true hero. The words of American poet Thomas William Parsons aptly describe our feelings about those heroes who sacrifice for our country: ''On thy grave, the rain shall fall from the eyes of a mighty nation.''

Sgt. Lance Davison, a valiant Marine and devoted father, is one of the reasons that our nation is mighty. We remember, honor and mourn him—Lance left us far too soon.

Lance, and all of our veterans, deserve a community and a country that stand up for our soldiers when they come home. These men and women have served honorably, but they may also struggle mightily.

For years, I've kept a quote on my desk that was given to me by a veteran. It says: "Because they have already paid the price, fight for veterans with all of your might."

Fight for veterans with all of your might. This is how we can honor Sgt. Lance Davison.

HONORING ZACHARY WATSON

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Zachary Watson. Zachary is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Zachary has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Zachary has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Zachary has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Zachary Watson for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CHICAGO BRIDGE & IRON COMPANY CELEBRATES ITS 125TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Chicago Bridge & Iron Company, a great corporate citizen as they celebrate 125 years in business.

At its founding in 1889, Benjamin Harrison was President and the Dakotas, Montana and Washington were becoming states, CB&I was establishing itself.

Since its creation CB&I has evolved from a bridge design and iron company into an energy industry problem solver that employs 50,000 people around the world, including many Americans. CB&I is known for innovation in bulk liquid storage and its unwavering support of oil exploration around the world.

This company has come a long way from the merger agreement between bridge designer Horace Horton and the Kansas City Wheelocks, George and William. During challenging international times, including World War I and World War II, CB&I helped keep our military strong and mobile. CB&I was essential in production of smaller, more maneuverable ships.

CB&I's industry milestones are many over the last century—from floating roof tanks to the double-wall liquid natural gas storage tanks to the first site-assembled thick wall steel nuclear reactor vessel—the innovations just keep coming. This success all started with a record number of bridges and structures now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Over 125 years and with workplaces in 130 countries, CB&I has evolved into one of the most energy infrastructure focused companies in the world, and it is a name The Woodlands, Texas knows well. The CB&I Tri, our local triathlon, is but one example of the worldwide support CB&I provides to the communities their employees call home. We also appreciate their efforts to use local suppliers to the fullest extent practicable.

Congratulate Philip Asherman, the President and CEO of CB&I and all those who have helped make CB&I the innovator it is today.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in congratulating CB&I on their 125th anniversary.

HONORING THE 26TH ANNIVERSARY OF YOUNG ISRAEL OF BOCA RATON AND RABBI MAYER & HENNA ENGLANDER AND YAAKOV & DR. JORIE LYONS

HON. THEODORE E. DEUTCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in honor of the 26th anniversary of Young Israel of Boca Raton, Florida synagogue. I would like to recognize them for their service to the Jewish community of South Florida and the local community as a whole.

Founded in 1988, Young Israel of Boca Raton has served as a center of Jewish identity and education for the South Palm Beach County community. I want to particularly acknowledge Rabbi Mayer and Henna Englander and Yaakov (Jay) and Dr. Jorie Lyons, the special honorees during the anniversary celebration, for their dedication to the synagogue and its emphasis on prayer, study, and community service.

I would like to congratulate Young Israel of Boca Raton synagogue, an extraordinary Jewish community of South Florida, on their 26th anniversary. Through their example, Young Israel's philosophy and spiritual guidance can extend far beyond South Florida.

HONORING GEORGE S. COLE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Mr. George S. Cole.

Mr. George Simeon Cole, the fifth child of nine siblings born to the late Elijah Cole, Sr. and ReeAlma George Cole, is a 1967 graduate of Velma Jackson High School. He was recently inducted into the Alcorn State University Sports Hall of Fame. Mr. Cole realized a lifelong dream when he was recruited by the late Coach Theophilus Danzy, and earned a four-year scholarship to Alcorn A & M College.

As a youth, Mr. Cole showed leadership, not only as a young football and baseball scholar, but in family responsibilities. At age 16, he worked as a brick mason helper to build Velma Jackson Elementary School. Mr. Cole served as captain of the Velma Jackson High School football team for three consecutive years, and was elected to serve as president of his senior class.

Mr. Cole earned an undergraduate degree from Alcorn State University, and a master's degree from Mississippi State University. He worked as a teacher-coach, retired as school principal, and presently works as a part-time education consultant. Mr. Cole serves as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Velma Jackson High School Foundation.

In a family of Alcornites, Mr. Cole is married to Dr. Pallascene Bright Cole, father to two children: Rocky and Gilda and three grandchildren: Jaylan, Christian, and Evan Elijah.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. George S. Cole for his dedication to serving others in Madison County.

HONORING RONALD AND LINDA FARMER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Ronald and Linda Farmer of Macon, Missouri. Ronnie and Linda were married on March 14, 1964 and will be celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary on March 9, 2014.

Ronnie and Linda were married at the Christian Church Parsonage in Kirksville, Missouri. Ronnie would work for 48 years at ConAgra, starting when he was a junior in high school up to his retirement in 2010. He was also very involved with the Boy Scouts and American Legion baseball. Linda has also served a very important role in her community, serving as a member of the Garden Club among other civic boards, while also playing an instrumental role in preserving the history of Macon, including the Colonel Blees Museum. Additionally, she currently serves on the Macon City Council. Whether taking long road trips across the country, riding roller coasters at Six Flags and Worlds of Fun here in Missouri, or just taking in a Cardinals' game at Busch Stadium, Ronnie and Linda have enjoyed life together and look forward to what the future has in store.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me, along with Ronald and Linda Farmer's three sons and their wives, seven grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and many friends and family, in congratulating them on this significant occasion and wishing them many more years of happiness together.

TO COMMEMORATE THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF BROWN UNIVERSITY

HON. DAVID N. CICILLINE

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 250th academic year of Brown University. This prestigious institution has been a source of pride for Rhode Island since 1764 and was one of the first colleges in the country. Throughout its history, Brown has attracted some of the best and brightest talent from around the world, and is known for a student body that is driven by a desire for free thought and self-determined education. Brown University is a treasured Rhode Island institution, and I am honored to recognize the integral role it has maintained in our community for the last two and a half centuries.

As one of the oldest universities in the United States, Brown University has infused its students with a deep and abiding dedication to public service. Brown's student body is remarkably intelligent and high-achieving. But this institution also challenges its students to be more than intelligent; it challenges students to sincerely consider how they can make the world a better place. Brown University encourages its students to explore their interests while serving local communities in Providence, the State of Rhode Island, the United States, and throughout the global community. With its famed Open Curriculum, this renowned university stands as a monument of free thought, allowing students to challenge themselves to grow not only academically, but also as citizens of the world.

Brown University has long drawn premier talent from a wide range of academic disciplines to historic College Hill. For example, the Brown University BrainGate research team was recently recognized for its work developing neurotechnology for individuals with neurologic disease, injury, or limb loss. Researchers and students at Brown have also been recognized for their work related to the discovery of the Higgs Boson, Superfund cleanups in Rhode Island, and important advances in public health. In addition to generating top-notch work on campus, Brown has also graduated alumni who excel in the arts, government, technology, medicine, business, athletics, and a diverse set of other professions. Some notable alumni include Horace Mann, the father of American public education, philanthropist and businessman John Rockefeller Jr., President of the World Bank Dr. Jim Yong Kim, and the Honorable Janet Yellen, who is the first woman to serve as Chair of the Federal Reserve. And in my home state of Rhode Island, alumni such as Governor Lincoln Chafee, Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Roberts, and former Attorney General Patrick Lynch have served in important positions in government.

Over the past 250 years, Brown University's history has been deeply intertwined with our nation's story. Brown has evolved during moments of tremendous transition—our fight for independence, the Civil War, the Great Depression, the Industrial Revolution, and the digital age—but it continues to reflect the principles of nondiscrimination and freedom of conscience rooted in Rhode Island's founding. I am confident that Brown will continue to grow in the next 250 years, and its hallowed halls will welcome brilliant and curious students for generations to come.

Finally, on a personal note, I am proud to have attended and graduated from Brown University, and I am even more proud to represent this fine institution in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Congratulations on 250 years.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE MIDDLEBOROUGH MAY FLOWER LODGE

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Middleborough May Flower Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons upon the occasion of its one hundred and fiftieth year of continued fellowship.

The Middleborough May Flower Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons was formally organized on March 4, 1864. Since then, the Lodge has provided fellowship, charity, education, and leadership to not just its members, but also to the town of Middleborough and surrounding communities. Since its chartering, the Lodge has actively increased its membership, currently totaling to two hundred members. The Lodge has worked vigorously over the years to promote self-improvement, personal study, and social betterment through the ideals of philanthropy and community involvement. My district in Massachusetts has great appreciation for the work that this Lodge has done, and it serves as an example for how community service and brotherhood can benefit our nation.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize the Middleborough May Flower Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons upon this significant anniversary. I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating them as well as wishing them many more happy and productive years ahead.

UNIQUE LITHO

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Unique Litho for achieving 25 years of outstanding membership in the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Membership in a Chamber of Commerce comes with commitment, dedication and contribution to community. Chamber members are leaders in the community mentoring other businesses, creating positive environments for business to thrive. The West Chamber serving Jefferson County is a strong and vibrant organization today due to members like Unique Litho.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Unique Litho for 25 years of leadership and inspiration you provide in our community. I look forward to many more years of your service.

HONORING THE VICTIMS OF SUMGAIT

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the twenty-sixth anniversary of the pogrom against people of Armenian descent in the town of Sumgait, Azerbaijan, where Armenian civilians were massacred at the hands of the Azerbaijani regime. Beginning on February 27, 1988 and for three days, Azerbaijani mobs assaulted and killed Armenians. Hundreds of Armenians were wounded, women and young girls were brutally raped, and many victims of all ages were burnt to death after being tortured and beaten. The carnage created thousands of ethnic Armenian refugees, who had to leave everything behind to be looted or destroyed, including their homes and businesses. The Sumgait Pogroms were part of an organized pattern, and were proceeded by a wave of anti-Armenian rallies throughout Azerbaijan, which culminated in the 1990 Pogroms in Baku.

These crimes were never adequately prosecuted by Azerbaijan authorities. Despite efforts by the Government of Azerbaijan to cover up the events which occurred in February 1988, survivors of the pogrom have come forward with their stories. They told of enraged mobs, which threw refrigerators and furniture, among other belongings from apartment balconies and set them afire. Armenians were dragged from their apartments. If they tried to run and escape, the mob attacked them with metal rods, hatchets and knives before the victims were thrown into the fire.

The Sumgait massacres led to wider reprisals against Azerbaijan's ethnic minority, resulting in the virtual disappearance of a once thriving population of 450,000 Armenians living in Azerbaijan, and culminating in the war launched against the people of Nagorno Karabakh. That war resulted in thousands dead on both sides and created over one million refugees in both Armenia and Azerbaijan.

In the years since the fighting ended, the people of Artsakh, the region's ancestral name, have struggled to build a functioning democratic state in the midst of unremitting hostility and threats from Azerbaijan, as well as incursions across the Line of Contact between the two sides, such as the recent murder of yet another Armenian soldier, Hrant Poghosyan, in an unprovoked attack by Azerbaijani troops against Armenian forces. Hatred towards Armenians is both celebrated and inculcated in Azeri youth, as exemplified by the case of Ramil Safarov, an Azerbaijani army captain who had confessed to the savage 2004 axe murder of Armenian army lieutenant Gurgen Margaryan, while the latter slept. At the time, the two were participating in a NATO Partnership for Peace exercise in Budapest, Hungary. After the murder, Safarov was sentenced to life in prison by a Hungarian court and imprisoned in Hungary.

In 2012, Safarov was sent home to Azerbaijan, purportedly to serve out the remainder of his sentence. Instead of serving out his sentence in an Azeri jail, he was pardoned, promoted to Major, given back pay and paraded through the streets of Baku in a disgusting and bloodthirsty welcome home.

With these appalling acts, the Azeri state reminded the whole world why the people of Artsakh must be allowed to determine their own future and cannot be allowed to slip into Aliyev's clutches, lest the carnage of Sumgait 26 years ago serve as a foreshadowing of a greater slaughter. Mr. Speaker, the memory of the victims of Sumgait must not be forgotten, and it is our moral obligation to condemn crimes of hatred, in hope that history will not be repeated.

IN TRIBUTE TO ANNA MAE WILSON ROBERTSON

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate and honor a mother, volunteer and veteran, Anna Mae Wilson Robertson. Mrs. Robertson, a long-time resident of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, will celebrate her 90th birthday with family and friends on March 8, 2014. Annie Mae Wilson married John Robertson, who passed away in 1982, and their 33 year union produced 8 children. Mrs. Robertson work history included jobs at Marquette University and St. Camillus Health Center.

Mrs. Robertson enlisted in the Army in 1945 and served in the Women's Army Corps (WAC) 6888 Central Postal Directory Battalion (The Six Triple Eight). The 6888 comprised of 855 women has a long list of firsts and accomplishments, including the first African American all-female battalion and the first and ONLY all women battalion to be deployed overseas. The 6888 confronted life threatening German U Boats on route to Europe in February, 1945 and upon their arrival in England were greeted by Buzz Bombs.

Letters and care packages vital to the morale of soldiers were delayed across Western Europe. The 6888 developed a new mail system housed in three air hangars from floor to ceiling for distribution to the 7 million Army, Navy, Marine Corps, civilian and Red Cross Personnel in Europe. The task was daunting with many letters addressed improperly; some letters were over two years old, and nearly 7500 Robert Smiths to be properly identified. The working conditions were abysmal with no heat in the hangars, windows blacked out due to air raids and the poor light contributed to eyestrain. However, the 6888 successfully processed 65,000 pieces of mail on each of the 3 shifts, 7 days a week.

The 6888 operated under the challenges of ''dual segregation'' being women and African American; they were not allowed to sleep, shower or eat with other female personnel or soldiers while in Birmingham, England. They were housed in a former boarding school and out of necessity operated their own mess hall, hair salon, and motor pool adding to their workload. The 6888 completed their assignment in 3 months instead of 6 months and were then reassigned to Rouen, France. While in France, they no longer faced the challenges of segregation. Again the 6888 completed their assignment in 3 months in Rouen, France and were reassigned to Paris, their last assignment with the war ending a short time later. Three women of the 6888 lost their lives overseas and were buried in France.

The 6888 was shipped home to Fort Dix and immediately disbanded. Anna Mae Robertson Wilson was a member of this ''Band of Sisters'', who served honorably, and whose story was largely untold and its successes not celebrated. Mr. Speaker, Anna Mae Wilson Robertson and the 6888 Central Postal Directory Battalion performed above and beyond expectations. I am proud to celebrate her 90th Birthday and her accomplishments as a veteran and resident of Milwaukee.

HONORING PASTOR DR. JOHN E. CAMERON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Pastor Dr. John E. Cameron who was born on June 11, 1932, just outside of Hattiesburg, Mississippi in Petal. His parents were the late Mr. A.C. and Mrs. Courtney Cameron. He is the fourteenth of sixteen children.

Pastor Cameron was educated in the Springfield Vocational High School in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, where he graduated in 1951. He later attended Alcorn A and M College in Lorman, Mississippi. He attended Rust College in Holly Springs, Mississippi where he received his B.S. degree. Pastor Cameron also attended the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville, Tennessee where his major was social science (theology).

Pastor Cameron has been serving in a pastoral position for more than forty years. His first position was at First Baptist Church in Oxford, Mississippi. He is currently pastor at Greater Mount Calvary Baptist Church in Jackson, Mississippi where he has been since 1970. Pastor Cameron has been active in numerous organizations and actively involved in the civil rights movement extending back prior to his involvement with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Pastor Cameron worked with Dr. King on voter registration campaigns in the Hattiesburg, Mississippi area.

Pastor Cameron has been involved in civic affairs which included his bid for the United States Congress Fifth Congressional District in the State of Mississippi. He was the director of the Hattiesburg Ministers' Project and served as Ambassador to Central America. Presently, he serves as a member of the Board of Directors of the Pearl River Valley Redevelopment Basin in Hinds County.

Pastor Cameron has been cited in Who's Who in Black America, Notable Americans in the Bicentennial Era and Outstanding Community Leader. He has received a proclamation from Mayor Dale Danks, Jr., a proclamation from Judge Alexander in Hinds County and he served as a colonel on Governor Cliff Finch's staff.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Pastor John E. Cameron for his dedication to serving others.

KAY EHALT

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Kay Ehalt for receiving the Unsung Hero Award from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

This award is given to an individual who gives of their time and resources to ensure the West Chamber remains a thriving and successful organization.

Kay Ehalt embodies all of the qualities of our unsung hero. Kay has been a West Chamber member since 1997. She was an Ambassador from the beginning, a member of the Friday morning Leads group and recently joined the West Chamber Board of Directors. You will find Kay wherever there is fun. She welcomes new members to events and makes everyone she meets feel important. Her work with the West Chamber has left an indelible mark for future West Chamber members.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Kay Ehalt for this well-deserved honor from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO WALTER EHLERS

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to a dear friend of mine, Walter Ehlers. Walter passed away on Thursday, February 20, 2014. A long time resident of California, he was a pillar of the community and he will be deeply missed.

Walter was born May 7, 1921, in Junction City, Kansas, and was raised from humble beginnings. While growing up, Walter spent many long, but rewarding days on the farm. This quickly changed when news of World War II broke and both Walter and his brother, Roland, decided that they wanted to join the Army and serve their country. The fact that Walter was underage at the time of his decision proved difficult, but after receiving special permission from his parents, the Ehlers brothers set out in 1940 to serve in the same unit. Their duty spanned from Sicily to North Africa, and became more intense as the war moved along. As what would become known as ''D-Day'' approached, Walter, 23, and his brother were split up into different units in an effort to better chances that at least one of them would survive the bloody attack.

The morning of June 6, 1944, Walter, a squad leader and staff sergeant, was tasked with getting his 12 men safely through the danger zone on Normandy Beach and move inland in order to fulfill their mission of collecting data on German troop activities. He and his squad survived several rounds of heavy fire as they moved along and Walter's guidance to ''run for cover'' proved successful time and time again. On June 10, 1944, Walter's squad came under such extreme fire that the company commander ordered a withdrawal. Walter knew that in order to get his

squad out of trouble, he would have to distract the enemy. He and another soldier began shooting at opposition forces as to draw fire onto themselves while the rest of the squad snuck away. An enemy sniper managed to shoot Walter in the back that fateful morning, but he still found a way to ensure that he and his fellow soldier, who had been more seriously injured, made it to safety. Because of his efforts and quick thinking, countless Allied soldiers' lives were saved that day. D-Day became a day that would live on as a costly success for all Americans, and especially for Walter, when he found that his brother had not survived.

After the war, Walter returned to Kansas for a short time before permanently moving out west to California. He had always dreamed of making it big in Hollywood and acting in movies. Though he did earn one movie credit staring as West Point Cadet Mike Shannon in the 1955 film, ''The Long Gray Line,'' his desire to serve within the community quickly became his top priority. Walter accepted a job as a benefits counselor at the Veterans Administration soon after and went on to help his fellow veterans in any way that he could for many years to come.

It is no surprise that Walter became very decorated over the years considering the immense service he committed to the United States. He was the recipient of a Silver Star, two Bronze Stars, a Purple Heart for the injuries he sustained in combat, and the nation's highest military award, a Medal of Honor. Throughout his life Walter was highly sought after to attend speaking engagements, and also spoke to President Clinton and Queen Elizabeth II of England during the 50th Anniversary of D-Day in France. He even found himself with an invitation to every presidential inauguration since Dwight D. Eisenhower's. Walter's legacy will live on in the form of the Walter D. Ehlers Community Center in Buena Park, an action figure made in his likeness, and the street named after him in Manhattan, Kansas.

Walter is survived by his loving wife, Dorothy; daughters, Cathy Metcalf and Tracy Kilpatrick; son, Walter Jr.; sisters, Leona Porter, Marjorie Justin and Gloria Salberg; 11 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

On Saturday, March 8, 2014, a memorial service honoring Walter's life will be held. Walter will always be remembered for his incredible leadership, service to our country, fearlessness, contributions to the community and love of family. His dedication to everything he did is truly a testament to a life lived well and a legacy that will continue. I extend my condolences to Walter's family and friends; although Walter may be gone, the light and goodness he brought to the world remain and will never be forgotten.

IN RECOGNITION OF MAJOR CARLO ROBERTO BRANCATO, USMCR

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Major Carlo Roberto Brancato as he is honored as the Man of the Year by the Amerigo Vespucci Society of Long Branch, New Jersey. Major Brancato is truly deserving of this recognition for his service to the Amerigo Vespucci Society, his community and our great nation.

Major Brancato joined the Marine Corps Reserve in 1995 and worked his way up the ranks, earning his promotion to Major in 2012. He served as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom and the U.S. Southern Command's Tradewinds operations in Belize and Antigua-Barbuda. He is the recipient of the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Service Medal for Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Operation Enduring Freedom Campaign Medal and the NATO ISAF Medal for service in Afghanistan. He is currently demobilized and serving as an artillery officer with the Third Battalion, 14th Regiment in Bristol, Pennsylvania and attending the Marine Corps' Command and Staff College Distance Education Program.

In addition to his service with the Marine Corps, Major Brancato is active in his local community. He is a Trustee with the Amerigo Vespucci Society, a member of the Marine Corps League and a member of the Knights of Columbus. He is currently pursuing his master's degree in history at Monmouth University in West Long Branch.

Major Brancato is the son of Charles Erasmus Brancato and Berenice Viali Johansson and a graduate of Middletown High School North. He received his bachelor's degree in history from Loyola College, where he was also a member of the Men's Varsity Rowing Team and an inductee into Phi Alpha Theta historical honor society.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in congratulating Major Brancato on his recognition as Man of the Year by the Amerigo Vespucci Society and thanking him for his honorable service to our nation.

PLANET HONDA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Planet Honda for achieving 25 years of outstanding membership in the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Membership in a Chamber of Commerce comes with commitment, dedication and contribution to community. Chamber members are leaders in the community mentoring other businesses, creating positive environments for business to thrive. The West Chamber serving Jefferson County is a strong and vibrant organization today due to members like Planet Honda.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Planet Honda for 25 years of leadership and inspiration you provide in our community. I look forward to many more years of your service.

HONORING MOTHER EVELYN MARSHALL-MAYS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Mother Evelyn Marshall-Mays. Mother Marshall spent her early years in historic Mound Bayou, Mississippi with her parents, the late Alford and Evelyn Harvey Marshall, along with nine siblings. She graduated from Mound Bayou High School in 1951.

Mother Marshall married Eddie Lee Mays in 1952, and they are the proud parents of five children. She worked diligently as a nurse for 25 years. Upon retirement, she operated a daycare center for over eight years.

Mother Marshall is an integral part of Liberal Trinity Church of God in Christ, fulfilling numerous roles: church mother, teacher of the primary Sunday school class for 57 years; mentor for young children and young women through conversation and an exemplary lifestyle, holding true to Psalm 121, encouraging everyone to love others and to follow God's Word and mandates.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mother Evelyn Marshall-Mays for her dedication to serving others.

HONORING NELLIE LONGSWORTH AS ''A PIONEER IN PRESERVATION''

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I am writing to recognize Nellie Longsworth of Maryland. As Founding President of Preservation Action, Ms. Longsworth was at the forefront of America's preservation movement, working tirelessly to protect historic places from destruction.

In 1974, historic preservationists came together to create Preservation Action in order to preserve our historic assets and make historic preservation a national priority. From the historic rehabilitation tax credit to historic preservation funding, Ms. Longsworth and Preservation Action built and deployed a grassroots constituency empowered with information and training to advance these worthy goals.

Mr. Speaker, Nellie Longsworth's career is the embodiment of the purposes underlying the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, which read in part:

> The spirit and direction of the Nation are founded upon and reflected in its historic heritage;
>
> The historical and cultural foundations of the Nation should be preserved as a living part of our community life and development in order to give a sense of orientation to the American people;
>
> The preservation of this irreplaceable heritage is in the public interest so that its vital legacy of cultural, educational, aesthetic, inspirational, economic, and energy benefits will be maintained and enriched for future generations of Americans.

All Americans who care about our nation's cultural resources are indebted to, and inspired by, Nellie Longsworth. As we observe

National Historic Preservation Advocacy Week, preservationists from across the nation will honor Nellie Longsworth for her extraordinary legacy.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Nellie Longsworth as a Pioneer in Preservation.

WELLS FARGO-APPLEWOOD

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Wells Fargo-Applewood for achieving 25 years of outstanding membership in the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Membership in a Chamber of Commerce comes with commitment, dedication and contribution to community. Chamber members are leaders in the community mentoring other businesses, creating positive environments for business to thrive. The West Chamber serving Jefferson County is a strong and vibrant organization today due to members like Wells Fargo-Applewood.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Wells Fargo-Applewood for 25 years of leadership and inspiration you provide in our community. I look forward to many more years of your service.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF STUART COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

HON. RUSH HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, this year, Stuart Country Day School of the Sacred Heart in Princeton, New Jersey celebrates its 50th anniversary as an independent, Catholic school that prepares young women for lives of leadership and civic engagement. Stuart Country Day School prides itself on educating young women of all faiths and fostering in them the strength of individual thought and expression.

Over the years, I have been fortunate to meet with the Stuart students who travel to Washington, DC and to take them on a tour of the Capitol Building. I am continuously impressed with their interest in our country's governance and with their insightful, inquisitive questions. After each visit, I come away inspired knowing they represent some of our country's next generation of leaders.

The success of the school and its students is not surprising. Even the main school building itself emphasizes the values of the school. Designed by New Jersey architect Jean Labatut 50 years ago, the building is immune to the changing fads and styles of our time. Original, warm, genuine, detailed down to the height of each step, adjusted for the demands of the 21st century, it is a model for emulation by other schools. And just like the building, its faculty and students embrace advancements in technology and pedagogy while remaining true to the personal faith, intellectual values, and social awareness so treasured by the Sacred Heart community.

I congratulate Stuart Country Day School of the Sacred Heart for fifty years of fostering young women to reach their full potential and become their better selves. May the next 50 years bring the same success and see generations of students develop into successful, upstanding citizens.

HONORING JAMES R. FIGGS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary Black History honoree, Mr. James R. Figgs.

Mr. Figgs is an activist for the Civil Rights Movement of Mississippi and the United States. He has participated in so many activities of discrimination against people of color. Mr. Figgs was involved with the late Medgar Evers of the NAACP Council Member through Voter Registration. Blacks were not able to register, because of their inability to pass a written exam.

He was involved as a youth college student and as an employee of several organizations. Mr. Figgs' mother, Ruth E. Figgs, instilled in him as a little boy to always stand up for his rights. His mother was also a Civil Rights Leader in Marks, MS.

Mr. Figgs has dedicated his entire life to working to make life a better place for the people of color.

Now Mr. Figgs is 71 years old and still fighting for just cause. For the past 45 years, he has been fighting for the rights of people, equal opportunities for jobs without discrimination, housing and protection from police brutality.

Mr. Figgs was a part of several marches and just to name a few, marched to free Nelson Mandela and marched to make sure poor people had an opportunity to register and vote. Mr. Figgs stated that he has been marching and petitioning in Mississippi all of his entire adult life.

He learned from and worked for the late Aaron E. Henry, of the Mississippi NAACP and the late Ben L. Hooks, the National Director of the NAACP for 16 years. Mr. Figgs is still on the battlefield fighting until all of the dreams of the Civil Rights Leaders become a reality.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. James R. Figgs for his dedication, hard work and being a part of history.

WELLS FARGO-GOLDEN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Wells Fargo-Golden for achieving 25 years of outstanding membership in the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Membership in a Chamber of Commerce comes with commitment, dedication and contribution to community. Chamber members are leaders in the community mentoring other businesses, creating positive environments for business to thrive. The West Chamber serving Jefferson County is a strong and vibrant organization today due to members like Wells Fargo-Golden.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Wells Fargo-Golden for 25 years of leadership and inspiration you provide in our community. I look forward to many more years of your service.

HOUSTON RODEO

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it's no secret that March is the month for Texas. Starting with the Texas Declaration of Independence on March 2, the fall of the defenders of the Alamo on March 6, and one of my personal favorite times of the year: the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo—the world's largest rodeo. All in the same week, Houston saddles up to reflect on Texas history and partake in the Houston Livestock Show, where millions of people flock to from all over the world for this one-of-a-kind Texas tradition.

Everyone knows about the Texas stereotype. When ''Northeasterners'' find out I'm from Texas, often times I am asked if people ride horses around town and if cowboy boots are worn every day. The truth is, during the Rodeo season, that stereotype comes to life. You bet you'll see trial riders parading through downtown Houston. Most years, it's on Texas Avenue, the historic street built to accommodate the early longhorn cattle drives coming to town on their way to the rail station.

Fun and games set aside, there is a very rich history behind the Houston Rodeo, in particular. The tradition began in 1931 when a few men came up with a unique idea to get together and have a ''Fat Stock Show.'' As strange as it might have sounded back then, the idea worked. Year after year, the show grew a little more. It used to be held in the Sam Houston Coliseum but has since been housed in different locations. I'll never forget the first year the show made its way to the Astrodome before officially landing at Reliant Park. Not to mention when the country music king, George Strait, honored and thanked the Astrodome for hosting so many years of the Houston Rodeo. He sang his famous ''Cowboy Rides Away.'' Other famous artists who have performed include Elvis Presley, Roy Rogers, Gene Autry and my all-time favorite, Charlie Pride.

To think that just a handful of men made it their mission to show off their livestock and share their passion of agriculture with Texas 83 years ago is fascinating. Not knowing the fate of their simple idea, the rodeo has evolved into the world's biggest and best-known livestock exhibition, the largest regular-season rodeo, some of the best musical performers, and the city's most popular and popular occasions. Additionally, the rodeo holds everything from the world's largest barbeque cook-off to a Texas-size fair.

Each year, Houston experiences a significant economic lift. With the millions of people who travel to Houston for the rodeo, the city

counts on a nice boost. Texans know how to show the tourists a good time and make themselves a pretty good living. The show itself has brought in more than $320 million in the past years and has created more than 7,000 full-time jobs. Not to brag but this is something Texans should take the utmost pride in.

The men of the Houston Rodeo are also known as the ''founding fathers.'' In 1930, they wanted to create more than just a rodeo. To put it simply, they wanted a rodeo with a purpose so they created a charitable event that contributed to the educational and scientific advancement of Texas agriculture. Throughout the history of the Rodeo, it has awarded $300 million to Texas youth in various forms, such as scholarships and educational programs. The best part is, all the work is done by several hundred generous volunteers.

As Texans put on their cowboy hats and boots, and saddle up for the rodeo, a Texas-sized thank you goes out to all of the thousands of volunteers who make the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo a success. For those who have never been, this is like the Texas version of Mardi Gras, but with cowboy hats. And there's nothing quite like it. For Texans, it's their cultural duty to attend. Every year, they know it's a good time comin'. God bless Texas. And that's just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY 28TH, 2014 AS RARE DISEASE DAY

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, Friday, February 28, 2014 was Rare Disease Day. And that is why I rise to let Americans know the importance of research, recognition and advocacy that is critical for individuals facing a rare disease diagnosis—and their families. The over 6000 rare disease can be characterized by a large range of disorders and symptoms, some of which are relatively common. In the United States, a disease is considered rare when it affects fewer than 200,000 persons, and 50% of rare diseases affect children.

While we have made important stride in the diagnosis and treatment of many rare diseases, far too many remind without any treatment or cure. Additionally, these individuals are too-often misdiagnosed, or given the wrong treatments due to a lack of scientific knowledge and information.

Despite these troubling facts, there is some good news. Scientific progress continues to make it possible to cure previously-untreatable conditions. For example, the Ear Foundation of Santa Barbara, California has recently done ground-breaking research into Patulous Eustachian Tube (pET) dysfunction. This rare disease occurs as a result of the Eustachian tube in the ear continuously staying open. Because symptoms include a feeling of ear fullness or oceanic roaring sounds, many physicians are unaware of the disorder and as such are unable to properly diagnose. Thanks to similar research organizations, patient groups, private foundations, and federal research leaders like the National Institute of Health (NIH), patients with rare conditions are finding increased relief.

Additionally, Congress has been making moves to encourage better coordination among researchers to develop cures and treatments for rare diseases. For example, the National Pediatric Research Network Act, a bipartisan law I co-authored with Congresswoman McMorris-Rodgers from Washington, was an important step to facilitate the creation of pediatric research consortia through NIH focused on improving pediatric disease research, with a special emphasis on rare diseases like spinal muscular atrophy (SMA). With better coordination, researchers can quickly share best practices while fostering partnerships to make research and clinical trials more accessible to those afflicted.

The next step that Congress should take to support individuals with rare diseases is to pass H.R. 460, the Patient's Access to Treatment Act (PATA), into law. This bipartisan bill that I coauthored with Congressman MCKINLEY from West Virginia would stop insurance companies from moving vital medications—often treatment for rare disorders—into costly ''specialty tiers,'' ending a significant financial barrier for insured individuals to access the care they need. With over eighty cosponsors thus far, this bill has the opportunity to affect positive change in the lives of thousands of patients and their families. I encourage my colleagues to join me as a cosponsor of this legislation to support all Americans currently living with rare diseases and those who will be diagnosed in the future.

B J HAMBLETON

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud B J Hambleton for receiving the Ambassador of the Year award from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

The West Chamber Ambassadors are the hospitality arm of the Chamber. They help members by inviting them to events, introducing them to each other and making new members feel a part of the West Chamber family more quickly.

B J has been an Ambassador since 2009, and when it comes to helping out, B J is the first person to volunteer. She is dedicated to helping members get the most out of their membership. You can find B J staffing the registration tables at most Chamber events, and she is known for her quick response to the many questions members ask.

I extend my deepest congratulations to B J Hambleton for her well-deserved honor from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future accomplishments.

HONORING ST. GABRIEL MERCY CENTER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable Civil Rights Organization, St. Gabriel Mercy Center in Mound Bayou, Mississippi.

On November 9, 1948 Father John W. Bowman was appointed head of the project mission in Mound Bayou. In 1949 St. Gabriel Parish began. Five acres of land were given to the Catholic Church and five acres were purchased by Father John.

On September 7, 1954 St. Gabriel Mission School for kindergarten through eighth grade was founded by the Oblate Sisters of Providence of Baltimore, Maryland, who were the first successful Roman Catholic sisterhood in the world established by women of African descent. The sisters had been invited to Mound Bayou by the Society of Divine Word Fathers under Father John Bowman.

The high school was added in 1958 and closed in 1961. The present church was built in 1960 and the convent was built in 1962.

After 30 years the Oblate sisters left and were followed by the Sisters of St. Agnes of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, who stayed five years; following from 1990–2001 by the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart from Reading, Pennsylvania, who opened an early childhood school after the grade school closed.

In 1994 the upper grades closed and the Early Childhood School opened for ages two through four year olds. In 1995 Sister Helen Papan, a Certified Parents as Teachers Educator, arrived and started a parenting program.

In 1997, the Gabriel Center was opened by Christian Brother Tom Geraghty and in 1999 three Sisters of Mercy arrived. In 2001 the early childhood school closed and the building became a community center for the citizens of Mound Bayou to continue their legacy of being an asset to an improvised community. The current Executive Director, Sister Donald Mary Lynch, joined St. Gabriel Mercy Center in 2001 and continued to expand on program offerings.

In 2002 the Mound Bayou County Library opened in the center. The library closed in 2010 due to renovations of the center and was relocated and reopened in 2011 to its current location in the Mound Bayou Community Facility Building. Sister Donald Mary Lynch is very involved in the community of Mound Bayou: working with school officials, former and current city officials, partnering with the local AARP chapter, working with the Taborian Project, serving on Congressman Thompson's Military Advisory Board and other civic organizations.

St. Gabriel Mercy Center offers numerous programs and services to the community of Mound Bayou and the surrounding communities such as: the Parent Education and Family Support program, which serves families throughout pregnancy until children reach the age of three; Parent Educators visit the new family in their home each month; Senior Outreach Program; Parents as Teachers; GED Program; St. Gabriel's Closet; Computer and Learning Lab; and Basic Emergency Needs & Jobs Opportunities Programs.

St. Gabriel Mercy Center continues the legacy of being a forerunner as a champion of civil rights, offering opportunities for the less fortunate, when others are afraid to take the lead.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing an amazing Civil Rights Organization for their dedication for change and equality.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today regarding one missed vote on February 28, 2014. Had I been present for rollcall 86, on the amendment offered by Mr. CUMMINGS of Maryland to H.R. 899, striking the requirement that independent regulatory agencies comply with Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, I would have voted "nay."

SHILOH HOME, INC.

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Shiloh Home, Inc. for achieving 25 years of outstanding membership in the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Membership in a Chamber of Commerce comes with commitment, dedication and contribution to community. Chamber members are leaders in the community mentoring other businesses, creating positive environments for business to thrive. The West Chamber serving Jefferson County is a strong and vibrant organization today due to members like Shiloh Home, Inc.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Shiloh Home, Inc. for 25 years of leadership and inspiration you provide in our community. I look forward to many more years of your service.

RECOGNIZING JULIE YOUNG

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is with sincere appreciation that I recognize Julie Young for her extraordinary leadership of Florida Virtual School. This month, Julie announced her retirement after 30 years of service in public education, including 17 years as President and CEO of Florida Virtual School.

Julie took the helm of Florida Virtual School, the country's first, state-wide Internet-based public high school, at its inception in 1997. Building upon her previous experience as a teacher and Education Instructional Specialist with IBM, Julie's vision to provide high quality, online courses to students throughout the state of Florida has met our students' needs and revolutionized education. Florida Virtual School has grown exponentially to provide online learning opportunities for students in kindergarten through high school, including a wide offering of elective and advanced placement courses. Today, Florida Virtual School is an award-winning Florida public school district serving more than 410,000 enrollments.

Julie has earned numerous awards for her leadership and innovation in education. Last year, Julie received the Orlando Business Journal's Women Who Mean Business Award which honors Central Florida's most influential business women. In recent years, Julie has also been awarded the Girl Scouts of Citrus Council Women of Distinction in Central Florida Award, Dr. Carlo Rodriguez Champion of School Choice Award, Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education Award, Outstanding Individual Contribution to K–12 Online Learning Award and the Florida Diversity Council's Multicultural Award in Education, just to name a few.

Florida Virtual School has received state, national and international awards for pioneering online education. Among the numerous awards received last year, the School received Elearning! Media Group's 2013 Learning! 100 Award for being named one of the top 100 learning organizations in the world.

I am truly grateful for Julie's work to provide world-class, accessible online education to Floridians and students around the world. Our community, our state and our students are better due to her service.

ON THE PASSING OF MR. WILLIAM HENRY MANSON, JR. IN RECOGNITION OF HIS MANY CONTRIBUTIONS TO EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA

HON. G.K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge and pay tribute to the life and contributions of Mr. William Henry Manson, Jr. For 88 years William Manson was a vital part of communities across North Carolina. On February 27, 2014, he passed away in Williamston, NC after a long and courageous fight with cancer.

Mr. Manson was born in Martin County, North Carolina to Mrs. Artimissie Tyner Manson and Mr. William Henry Manson on May 3, 1925. He was raised on his grandfather's farm which undoubtedly helped to develop his work ethic and guide him throughout his life and career. William joined the Back Swamp Church of Christ when he was eight years old, and went on to serve as a Sunday school teacher and as Church Treasurer for many years.

Much of Mr. Manson's success and contributions can be attributed to his passion for education, which seemed to grow with each year. He graduated from Williamston Colored High School in 1944 and went on to graduate from North Carolina College at Durham, now known as North Carolina Central University, in 1948 with a Bachelor's Degree in Science. William also studied at New York University, the University of California at Los Angeles, and North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. His love for education enabled him to give back to students as a teacher, attendance counselor, and sports official in Martin County.

Beyond the classroom, William Manson left an indelible mark on many eastern North Carolinians. He served on the Martin County Board of Commissioners for more than 20 years, where he was a strong advocate for community residents. He was also the founder and owner of Manson Mortuary, helping grieving families through some of their most difficult times. In addition, Mr. Manson was active in his community, holding memberships to Martin County Red Cross, Martin County United Way, and by serving as a Trustee of Martin Community College.

Perhaps his most important accomplishment was William's devotion to family. He married his late wife Emeline in 1952, and raised two daughters—the late Ms. Jacqueline Manson and Ms. Keisha Manson. William Manson is survived by his daughter Keisha, and his two grandchildren Mr. Isaac J. Veale and Ms. Sarina F. Veale.

There is no question that William's legacy of hard work and determination will live on not only through his family, but in each of the lives he influenced and touched. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Mr. William Henry Manson, Jr.

ST. ANTHONY HOSPITAL

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud St. Anthony Hospital for receiving the Large Business of the Year Award from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

This award is given to an organization which exemplifies leadership, collaboration and gives back to the community.

St. Anthony Hospital moved to Lakewood, Colorado in 2011. In two years they have grown to 1600 employees and a campus at 90% capacity in the medical office buildings. They also bring substantial financial investment, vibrancy and first class medical care to our community.

I extend my deepest congratulations to St. Anthony Hospital for this well-deserved honor from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County. I am proud to have this crown jewel in Colorado's 7th Congressional District.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is $17,463,228,562,652.94. We've added $6,836,351,513,739.86 to our debt in 5 years. This is over $6.8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING MR. CLINTON AND MRS. BEULAH MELTON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, this month is Black History month and I

rise to honor two members of African American black history. They were two innocent lives cut short, Mr. Clinton Melton and his wife, Mrs. Beulah Melton of Glendora (Tallahatchie County), Mississippi.

Being a part of history does not always require some extraordinary feat but sometimes simply being innocent and unjustly victimized. This is the case, Mr. Speaker with Mr. Melton and his wife, Mrs. Melton. They were two young African Americans living in the small town of Glendora, MS working hard and raising their four children. He was a gas station attendant but her occupation was never mentioned because her murder was covered up and only mentioned as a reckless driving incident and not really spoken of.

Clinton Melton, Murdered: On December 3, 1955, Mr. Melton, a 33 year old gas station attendant of Lee McGarrh Firestone gas station in Glendora, went outside to gas up the car that Elmer Otis Kimball was driving. The car belonged to J.W. Milam, who had been acquitted on September 23, 1955 for the mutilation and murder of Emmett Louis Till.

The story goes that Mr. Kimball asked for $2 worth of gas but because the amount Mr. Melton actually put in the car was not $2 (amount unknown) he was killed. Mr. Kimball had become enraged about the gas, and very loud and publicly vowed to return and kill Mr. Melton—a promise he kept, returning shortly thereafter leaving only to retrieve his shotgun. Mr. Clinton Melton was killed instantly in front of three witnesses (the owner, a friend, and a bystander) leaving behind his young wife and children.

The trial of Elmer Otis Kimball, as in the Emmett Till's murder trial held at the Sumner Courthouse in Sumner, Mississippi (Tallahatchie County), resulted in yet another "not guilty" verdict.

Beulah Clinton, Murdered: She was a wife and mother of four who didn't deserve being murdered and forgotten about. Therefore Mr. Speaker, I rise today to also make sure her life is not forgotten by telling her story. At that time, the acquittal and humiliation of the Emmett Till murder trial was a fresh wound in Glendora, home of the murdered, and across entire Tallahatchie County. But, as a mother and wife, Mrs. Melton would not let that stop her. In March, 1956 one day, while out driving in an effort to gather information for the upcoming murder trial of her husband, Mrs. Melton was forced off the road into a bayou. In the car she had two of her small children, Debris and Clinton Melton, Jr. Both were rescued by a relative who saw the car while driving by.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the late Mr. Clinton and Mrs. Beulah Melton for Black History Month, whose lives were cut short for no justifiable reason from the Mississippi Second Congressional District.

OLINGER CROWN HILL CEMETERY AND MORTUARY

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Olinger Crown Hill Cemetery and Mortuary for achieving 25 years of outstanding membership in the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Membership in a Chamber of Commerce comes with commitment, dedication and contribution to community. Chamber members are leaders in the community mentoring other businesses, creating positive environments for business to thrive. The West Chamber serving Jefferson County is a strong and vibrant organization today due to members like Olinger Crown Hill Cemetery and Mortuary.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Olinger Crown Hill Cemetery and Mortuary for 25 years of leadership and inspiration you provide in our community. I look forward to many more years of your service.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIM GRIFFIN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I was delayed and missed rollcall vote No. 40 on Wednesday, February 5, 2014.

If I had been present, I would have voted "nay" for the Motion to Recommit H.R. 3590, the Sportmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) Act of 2013.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I missed votes during the week of February 10th due to eye surgery.

Had I been present, I would have cast the following votes: on rollcall No. 55, I would have voted "yes;" on rollcall No. 56, I would have voted "yes;" on rollcall No. 57, I would have voted "yes;" on rollcall No. 58, I would have voted "no;" on rollcall No. 59, I would have voted "no;" on rollcall No. 60, I would have voted "no;" on rollcall No. 61 regarding the Temporary Debt Limit Extension Act, I would have voted "yes;" on rollcall No. 62, I would have voted "yes."

HONORING THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF EL PASO

HON. BETO O'ROURKE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Catholic Diocese of El Paso as they celebrate their 100 year anniversary.

El Paso and the Catholic Church have shared a long history. The El Paso region was settled by Franciscan missionaries in the 1600s. Since then, the Catholic Church has contributed to El Paso in many important ways. From the founding of the first hospital in El Paso, Hotel Dieu; to building the Ysleta Mission, the oldest continuously operating church in the State of Texas; to installing the first Hispanic bishop in the nation, Bishop Patrick Flores installed in 1978.

The current Diocese serves more than 680,000 Catholics in and around El Paso. As champions of the poor and the vulnerable, the Diocese of El Paso operates one of the largest legal aid clinics in the southwest and provides health care and education to thousands in my community. It has also welcomed and given shelter to migrants and refugees from Mexico and around the world.

The Diocese of El Paso has been of the El Paso community for one hundred years. I invite my colleagues to recognize their history of service as they embark on their next century.

MAYOR STEVE BURKHOLDER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Mayor Steve Burkholder for receiving the first annual Steve Burkholder Diamond Legacy Award from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

The award is given to an individual who is recognized as a "shining star" due to their leadership and contributions in making Jefferson County a better place to reside.

Mayor Burkholder spent his adult life contributing to the betterment of Jefferson County and their residents. Steve's accomplishments are many. They include serving as past President of the Colorado Municipal League, a member of the Metro Mayors Executive Committee and serving as fellow of the Institute on the Common Good at Regis University.

Steve's latest quest is making sure every two and three year old from high risk or vulnerable families are preschool ready through the Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP). Steve is a founding member of the PCHP Jeffco Advisory Group. Their mission is to positively impact school readiness and long term learning.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Mayor Steve Burkholder for this well-deserved honor from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County. I have no doubt Mayor Burkholders's commitment to community will be felt by Jefferson County residents for years to come.

RECOGNIZING THE DEDICATED SERVICE OF MR. JOHN MORAN

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a special individual whose contributions to this country, especially its veterans, are innumerable. His name is John Moran, and he has just retired from Federal service as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor for the Veterans' Employment and Training Service.

Last week, John closed out a career that has spanned 35 years of dedicated service to his country. His accomplishments in that time

are remarkable. In fact, John began his career protecting the public and Members of the House and Senate as a United States Capitol Policeman.

John was born and raised in Worcester, Massachusetts. In 1979, he graduated from Westfield State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice. As I stated earlier, he began his Federal career as a member of the United States Capitol Police, then, later as a Federal Air Marshal/Special Agent with the FAA. Throughout his 35 year career, Mr. Moran progressed through a variety of managerial and senior executive positions:

Special Agent in Charge, Washington, D.C. Civil Aviation Security Field Office;

Chief of Staff, FAA Office of Airports; Program Assessment and Evaluation Officer, in the Office of Civil Aviation Security;

Director, of the Red Team and Explosives Security Division, at the Office of Civil Aviation Security.

Following the attacks on September 11th, Mr. Moran played a crucial role in helping to shape the legislation that founded the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and was instrumental in building it from the ground up. For his hard work and dedication, Mr. Moran received a September 11th Service Medal from the Secretary of Transportation in recognition of his pivotal role and unwavering service to his country.

He then became the TSA Assistant Administrator responsible for all aspects of training of a workforce of over 50,000 personnel and served as Vice Chair of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Accreditation Board. In 2005, Mr. Moran was asked to serve as the acting Associate Administrator.

Mr. Moran's final Federal service was as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Veterans Employment and Training Service or VETS at the Department of Labor. In this position, Mr. Moran was the go-to executive during a leadership transition in which he was responsible for important veterans employment programs such as the Jobs for Veterans State Grant program, the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program, the Women's Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program, the Incarcerated Veterans Program, the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program, and the Transition Assistance Program. Literally thousands of veterans are now employed because of John Moran's dedication to the betterment of those who have worn the nation's military uniforms.

On behalf of the House Committee on Veterans' affairs, I wish John and his family every success in the future.

HONORING LARRY W. WHITE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a self motivated and innovative man, Mr. Larry W. White. Mr. White has shown what can be done through tenacity, dedication and a desire to achieve.

Mr. White was born January 26, 1959 in Cannonsburg, MS; he is the second of seven children. His mother Josephine Jackson is his greatest inspiration.

After high school Mr. White proudly served his country from 1977 to 1997 in the U.S. Navy where he retired as an Aviation Electronic Technician. During his career, Mr. White traveled the world: Guam, Italy, France, Germany, Europe, Korea and many other countries, and was stationed in Memphis, Lemoore, Norfolk, Jacksonville and San Diego in the U.S. He received his education, training, numerous awards and certificates while serving in the Navy.

Mr. White serves on the Yazoo City Chamber of Commerce, FCC Community Development Board and member of the American Legion. Larry W. White is Founder, President and CEO of AA Calibration Services, LLC, a fast growing measurement and repair service for test and measurement equipment users, that was founded in 2004 after Larry became unemployed, with the closing of L–3 Communication's calibration lab. Larry purchased L–3 Communication's lab equipment and formed of AA Calibration Services on the Main Street of Yazoo City, MS, he was the sole employee.

Rejected by banks for loans, Larry worked and saved to expand his business in 2010. Today, AA Calibration Services, LLC, located at 111 Roosevelt Hudson Drive in Yazoo City, MS, employs eighteen and has a customer base of about one hundred.

Mr. White is a member of King Solomon M. B. Church. In his free time he enjoys attending family functions, playing dominos, golf, fishing, and watching the Chicago Bears.

Mr. White is married to Dorothy White and to that union they have five children: Jamie, Anthony, Etoya, Yolanda and Ariel.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Larry W. White for his passion and dedication to serving our great Country and desire to make a difference in the lives of others.

IRAN SUPPORT FOR TERRORISM WORLDWIDE

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, recent attention on Iran has focused on its nuclear weapons program—but this is not the whole picture.

Iran is also the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism.

Using both its own military operatives and its proxy Hezbollah, Iran has planned attacks around the globe.

Iran has no problem sending members of its Revolutionary Guard Corps and Quds Force to target Western interests abroad.

They also have their very own terrorist organization—Hezbollah—to do their bidding.

The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps funds, trains, arms, and directs Hezbollah, one of the world's deadliest terrorist organizations.

Years ago Hezbollah was a limited, regional threat. Today, it is an international movement.

Right now, Hezbollah is most actively engaged in Syria.

With Iran's backing, Hezbollah supports the murderous Assad regime, which slaughters innocent Syrians every day.

Without Hezbollah, Assad would have been defeated. Instead, Iran has stayed in the fight and more than 140,000 lives have been lost.

Unfortunately, Iran and Hezbollah are not confined to attacks in the Middle East.

In Afghanistan, the Iranians provide arms and training to Taliban fighters who use them to kill U.S. and Afghan forces.

In Africa, Iran and Hezbollah have planned attacks in Nigeria, Sudan, and Kenya, and are expanding their terrorist and criminal networks in Senegal and Gambia.

In Europe, Iran has attempted to assassinate foreign diplomats and tourists.

A 2012 attack in Bulgaria killed six and injured 32 people. Other attacks were also planned in Turkey, Georgia, and Azerbaijan.

The same has been true in Asia. Iran and Hezbollah have planned numerous plots in India and Thailand.

Perhaps most troubling is Iran's expansion into Latin America and the fact that our State Department denies it is happening to this very day.

Despite clear evidence that Hezbollah is colluding with drug organizations to launder money and gather support, the Obama Administration continues to downplay this threat.

Hezbollah uses Venezuela banks to launder hundreds of millions of dollars a year and smuggle narcotics to U.S. and European markets.

It has also conducted terrorist training on Margarita Island for recruits from Venezuela and other Latin American countries.

No one is safe, including Americans abroad and even here at home.

In October 2011, the Saudi Ambassador to the U.S. was targeted in Washington, DC. There is strong evidence linking Hezbollah and the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps to this attack.

Anyone who hoped that the new Iranian President Hassan Rouhani would have stopped all this is wrong.

Like his predecessor, he continues to support terrorism.

Just last month Iran's parliament claimed that Hezbollah has "tens of thousands" of missiles prepared for a battle with Israel.

Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, described it best when he said the Iran–Hezbollah relationship was "a partnership agreement, with the Iranians as the senior partner."

International efforts to combat this expanding threat have improved, but still fall short of what needs to be done.

I commend the European Union for blacklisting Hezbollah's military wing, but they must understand that there are not two separate Hezbollahs.

There is one Hezbollah. The military wing and political wing are not separate. The entire organization needs to be sanctioned in order for those tools to really bite.

2014 marks the 30 year anniversary of Iran's placement on the State Department's "State Sponsors of Terrorism" list.

This problem will only get worse if the Administration allows Iran to develop nuclear weapons.

Clearly, it is time for the United States and its allies to develop a coherent and comprehensive plan to stop Iranian-backed terrorism.

We can start by renewing the sanctions on Iran rather than easing them. Iran only can be forced to do the right thing internationally because their moral code regarding right and wrong is amiss.

And that's just the way it is.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. SRINIVASA YEGNASUBRAMANIAN

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Srinivasa Yegnasubramnian (Dr. Mani). The title of Dharmatma was recently bestowed upon Dr. Mani by His Holiness Shankarachari. As the first United States citizen and only the third person to be awarded this title, Dr. Mani's prestigious honor is truly deserving of this body's recognition.

Dr. Mani serves as Chairman of the Hindu American Temple and Cultural Center in Morganville, New Jersey and Chairman of Sringeri Vidya Bharati Foundation, USA (SVBF) in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania. As the leader of these organizations, Dr. Mani oversees the many activities and outreach efforts provided to the communities and ensure that the centers provide outstanding spiritual and community service. Additionally, under Dr. Mani's leadership, SVBF has seen significant accomplishments and growth, including the establishment of the first goshala to be associated with a Hindu Temple in the United States and the construction of a monastery and temple in Toronto, Canada.

Over the years, Dr. Mani has been recognized by various organizations in both the United States and India for his humanitarian efforts. In addition to his most recent title of Dharmatma, Dr. Mani has also been honored with the titles of Dharma Chintamani (the crown-Pearl of Righteous Thoughts) and Dharma Rakshamani (the crown-pearl of protector of Dharma), among many other honors.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in celebrating Dr. Srinivasa Yegnasubramnian's honor of being conferred as Dharmatma. He continues to provide outstanding leadership, service and dedication to the Hindu faith and the community.

RECOGNIZING THE DEDICATED SERVICE OF ALICE GEISHECKER

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to recognize the contributions of Mrs. Alice Geishecker to the United States House of Representatives and this great Nation upon the occasion of her retirement. Alice is a true American patriot with over 38 combined years of supporting Military members and families.

Since September 2001, Ms. Geishecker served as a Congressional Liaison Representative with the United States Air Force House Liaison Office. In this capacity, she was responsible for maintaining a continuous Air Force presence in the United States House of Representatives. Her primary role was to facilitate personal contacts between Air Force leaders, Members of Congress, key personnel and professional House staff. She monitored the ever-changing political environment on Capitol Hill to advise the Secretary of the Air Force and Chief of Staff of the Air Force. Alice was the primary focal point for administrative functions within the office to include all logistical support for events, Congressional member travel departures and arrivals, and movements of Senior Air Force Leadership within the Capitol complex. This endeared her to many Members of Congress and their offices.

Prior to joining the Air Force Liaison Office in the House of Representatives, Alice worked as a contract employee in 1978 with University of Maryland at Camp Pieri, Wiesbaden, Germany and took her oath to federal service on July 5, 1989 working Family Support Services at the United States Military Academy at West Point. Alice also worked with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) liaison officers at the Army Command and General Staff College, Directorate of Combat Development, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas and various divisions within the acquisition community and with the Director of Manpower in the Pentagon.

Alice had a varied and full civil servant career, but also served as a dedicated Army spouse to her husband Alan, a retired Lieutenant Colonel; loving mother to her three children, Cassie, Angelina, and Julie; and grandmother of eight. Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the entire United States Congress, it is an honor to recognize the career and service of Mrs. Alice Geishecker. My wife Vicki and I congratulate Alice and wish her and her family all the best.

HONORING BETHEL AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a pillar of the community, Bethel African Methodist Episcopal. Bethel AME has served as a catalyst for the African American growth in Warren County and the State of Mississippi.

Founded in 1864 by Pastor Page Tyler, a missionary from Indiana, Bethel was the first African Methodist Episcopal church in Mississippi. It is known as The Mother Congregation of African Methodism in the state. Although other black churches have earlier histories, they were organized as Methodist Episcopal and later united under the A.M.E. religion. Bethel, however, was the first congregation organized by the A.M.E. connection in Mississippi and the second in the southern United States.

Bethel has a rich legacy as her members served as pioneers in progressing African-American culture greatly forward in the State of Mississippi. The first African-American Masonic Lodge in Mississippi was organized at Bethel in 1875 by the first Pastor of Bethel, Reverend Dr. T.W. Stringer, a freeman from Canada. Adding to her history, in 1890, Campbell College, the first African-American College in Mississippi was established and operated from an adjoining building to Bethel. The college moved to Jackson, MS in 1897 and was absorbed by Jackson State University.

In 1992 Bethel was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in the United States and the City of Vicksburg captures Bethel's historic significance with inclusion of a 19th Century Bethel and Congregation on its Riverfront Murals.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Bethel African Methodist Episcopal for its rich heritage and dedication to serving others and giving back to the community.

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

See Résumé of Congressional Activity.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S1257–S1284

Measures Introduced: Three bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2075–2077, S.J. Res. 32, and S. Res. 369. **Page S1281**

Measures Considered:

Child Care and Development Block Grant Act: Senate resumed consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990. **Pages S1257–59**

Messages from the President: Senate received the following messages from the President of the United States:

Transmitting, pursuant to law, the continuation of the national emergency originally declared in executive order 13288 on March 6, 2003, with respect to the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions, as received during adjournment of the Senate on February 28, 2014; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. (PM–31) **Page S1278**

Transmitting, pursuant to law, the Budget of the United States Government for Fiscal Year 2015; referred jointly, pursuant to the order of January 30, 1975 as modified by the order of April 11, 1986; which was referred to the Committees on Appropriations; and the Budget. (PM–32) **Pages S1278–80**

Adegbile Nomination—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at approximately 10 a.m., on Wednesday, March 5, 2014, Senate resume consideration of the nomination of Debo P. Adegbile, of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General, under the order of Monday, March 3, 2014. **Page S1283**

Nomination Received: Senate received the following nomination:

1 Coast Guard nomination in the rank of admiral. **Page S1284**

Messages from the House: **Page S1280**

Measures Referred: **Page S1280**

Measures Read the First Time: **Page S1280**

Executive Communications: **Pages S1280–81**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S1281–83**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Page S1283**

Additional Statements: **Page S1277**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S1283**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 2 p.m. and adjourned at 6:14 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, March 5, 2014. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S1283.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Committee announced that Senator Tester resigned his position as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment effective at close of business on February 28, 2014.

UNITED STATES ALLIANCES IN NORTHEAST ASIA

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs concluded a hearing to examine strengthening United States alliances in Northeast Asia, after receiving testimony from Daniel R. Russel, Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs; David F. Helvey, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia; and Sheila Smith, Council on Foreign Relations, and

Michael R. Auslin, The American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, both of Washington, D.C.

BUSINESS MEETING

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee ordered favorably reported the nominations of Caroline Diane Krass, of the District of Columbia, to be General Counsel of the Central Intelligence Agency, John P. Carlin, of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, and Francis Xavier Taylor, of Maryland, to be Under Secretary of Homeland Security for Intelligence and Analysis.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 11 public bills, H.R. 4137–4147; and 2 resolutions, H.J. Res. 111 and H.Res. 498, were introduced. **Pages H2147–48**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H2148–49**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 3189, to prohibit the conditioning of any permit, lease, or other use agreement on the transfer, relinquishment, or other impairment of any water right to the United States by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture, with amendments (H. Rept. 113–372, Pt. 1) and

H. Res. 497, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3826) to provide direction to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the establishment of standards for emissions of any greenhouse gas from fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4118) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to delay the implementation of the penalty for failure to comply with the individual health insurance mandate (H. Rept. 113–373). **Page H2147**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Denham to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H2101**

Communication from the Sergeant at Arms: Read a letter from Paul D. Irving, Sergeant at Arms, in which he notified the House that pursuant to clause 12(c) of rule I, an imminent impairment of the place of reconvening for the House meeting of 12 noon on Monday, March 3, 2014, was in place due to weather. Subsequently, the Chair announced that the rescheduling of the time of meeting for the House at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, March 4, 2014 had been communicated to the Members. **Page H2101**

Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the guest chaplain, Reverend Harvey Peters, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. **Page H2101**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Home Heating Emergency Assistance Through Transportation Act of 2014: H.R. 4076, to address shortages and interruptions in the availability of propane and other home heating fuels in the United States; **Pages H2103–06**

Supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democratic change and calling to end the violence: H. Res. 488, amended, to support the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democratic change and to call to end the violence, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 393 yeas to 1 nay, Roll No. 92; **Pages H2106–09, H2142**

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: "Supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democracy, a reduction in violent crime and calling for an end to recent violence.". **Page H2142**

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Conservation and Recreation Act: S. 23, to designate as wilderness certain land and inland water within the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in the State of Michigan; **Pages H2125–26**

North Fork Watershed Protection Act: H.R. 2259, amended, to withdraw certain Federal land and interests in that land from location, entry, and patent under the mining laws and disposition under the mineral and geothermal leasing laws and to preserve existing uses; **Pages H2126–28**

Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act: H.R. 3370, amended, to delay the implementation

of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 306 yeas to 91 nays, Roll No. 91; and

Pages H2128–39, H2141–42

Agreed by unanimous consent that in the engrossment of H.R. 3370, the Clerk be authorized to make the corrections placed at the desk. **Page H2142**

York River Wild and Scenic River Study Act: H.R. 2197, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate segments of the York River and associated tributaries for study for potential inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

Pages H2139–41

Recess: The House recessed at 4:13 p.m. and reconvened at 5 p.m. **Page H2125**

Suspensions—Proceedings Postponed: The House debated the following measures under suspension of the rules. Further proceedings were postponed:

United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act: H.R. 938, amended, to strengthen the strategic alliance between the United States and Israel and

Pages H2109–15

Better Buildings Act: H.R. 2126, amended, to facilitate better alignment, cooperation, and best practices between commercial real estate landlords and tenants regarding energy efficiency in buildings.

Pages H2115–22

Presidential Messages: Read a message from the President wherein he notified Congress that the national emergency declared with respect to the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2014—referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed (H. Rept. 113–94). **Pages H2102–03**

Read a message from the President wherein he transmitted to Congress his Budget of the United States Government for Fiscal Year 2015—referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed (H. Doc. 113–84). **Pages H2122–25**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Two yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H2141–42 and H2142. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 2 p.m. and adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Committee Meetings

SMITH-LEVER ACT ON ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

Committee on Agriculture: Subcommittee on Horticulture, Research, and Biotechnology and Foreign Agriculture held a hearing to review the Smith-Lever Act on its 100th Anniversary. Testimony was heard from Sonny Ramaswamy, Director National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Department of Agriculture; and public witnesses.

APPROPRIATIONS—GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch held a hearing on the Government Printing Office FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from Davita Vance-Cooks, Public Printer, Government Printing Office.

APPROPRIATIONS—ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch held a hearing on the Architect of the Capitol FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from Stephen T. Ayers, Architect of the Capitol.

APPROPRIATIONS—CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch held a hearing on the Congressional Budget Office FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from Doug Elmendorf, Director, Congressional Budget Office.

MANAGING MEDICARE CAN PROTECT SENIORS' BENEFITS AND SAVE THEM MONEY

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing entitled "Keeping the Promise: How Better Managing Medicare Can Protect Seniors' Benefits and Save Them Money". Testimony was heard from Kathleen King, Director, Health Care, Government Accountability Office; James Cosgrove, Director Health Care, Government Accountability Office; and Robert Vito, Regional Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General.

IRAN'S SUPPORT FOR TERRORISM WORLDWIDE

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa; and Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade held a joint hearing entitled "Iran's Support for Terrorism Worldwide". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MIXED SIGNALS: THE ADMINISTRATION'S STANCE ON MARIJUANA, PART TWO

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Government Operations held a hearing entitled ''Mixed Signals: The Administration's Stance On Marijuana, Part Two'', Testimony was heard from Thomas M. Harrigan, Deputy Administrator, Drug Enforcement Administration; and John F. Walsh, Attorney, Department of Justice.

ALASKA BYPASS MAIL DELIVERY: A BROKEN SYSTEM

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, U.S. Postal Service, and the Census held a hearing entitled ''Alaska Bypass Mail Delivery: A Broken System''. Testimony was heard from Senator Begich; and Representative Young; Ron Haberman, Alaska District Manager, United States Postal Service; Tammy Whitcomb, Deputy Inspector General, United States Postal Service, Office of Inspector General; Dennis Devany, Deputy Director, Office of Aviation Analysis, Office of Aviation and International Affairs, Department of Transportation; and public witnesses.

SUSPENDING THE INDIVIDUAL MANDATE PENALTY LAW EQUALS FAIRNESS ACT; AND ELECTRICITY SECURITY AND AFFORDABILITY ACT

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 4118, the ''Suspending the Individual Mandate Penalty Law Equals Fairness Act''; and H.R. 3826, the ''Electricity Security and Affordability Act''. The Committee granted by record vote of 5–4, a structured rule for H.R. 3826. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule makes in order as original text for the purpose of amendment an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113–40 and provides that it shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute. The rule makes in order only those further amendments printed in the Rules Committee report. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in the report. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. In section 2, the rule provides a closed rule for H.R. 4118. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that the bill shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill. The rule provides one motion to recommit. Testimony was heard from Representatives Jenkins, McDermott, Whitfield, and Waxman.

MARITIME TRANSPORTATION REGULATIONS: IMPACTS ON SAFETY, SECURITY, JOBS, AND THE ENVIRONMENT: PART II

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation held a hearing entitled ''Maritime Transportation Regulations: Impacts of Safety Security, Jobs, and the Environment; Part II. Testimony was heard from Rear Admiral Joseph Servidio, Assistant Commandant for Prevention Policy, United States Coast Guard; Michael Shapiro, Principal Deputy Assistant Office of Transportation and Air Quality, Office of Air and Radiation, Environmental Protection Agency; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 2014

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of Defense, to hold hearings to examine national security space launch programs, 10 a.m., SD–192.

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program, 9:30 a.m., SH–216.

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, to hold hearings to examine nuclear forces and policies in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program, 2:30 p.m., SR–222.

Committee on the Budget: to hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015, 10 a.m., SD–608.

Committee on Finance: to hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015;

to be immediately followed by a business meeting to consider subcommittee vacancies and other organizational matters, 10:30 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of L. Reginald Brothers, Jr., of Massachusetts, to be Under Secretary for Science and Technology, and Francis Xavier Taylor, of Maryland, to be Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis, both of the Department of Homeland Security, 9:30 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: business meeting to consider the nomination of Maria Contreras-Sweet, of California, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration, 10:30 a.m., SR–428A.

Special Committee on Aging: to hold hearings to examine income security and the elderly, focusing on securing gains made in the war on poverty, 2:15 p.m., SD–562.

Joint Meetings

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: to hold hearings to examine developments in the Western Balkans and policy responses, focusing on policy approaches of the United States toward the countries of the Western Balkans, 10 a.m., SD–106.

Joint Hearing: Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, to hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of Veterans of Foreign Wars, 10 a.m., SD–G50.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRAM AHEAD

Week of March 5 through March 7, 2014

Senate Chamber

On *Wednesday,* at 10 a.m., Senate will resume consideration of the nomination of Debo P. Adegbile, of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General, and vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination at 11:45 a.m. If cloture is invoked, Senate will vote on confirmation of the nomination. Following disposition of the nomination of Debo P. Adegbile, or if cloture is not invoked on the nomination, Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Pedro A. Delgado Hernandez, of Puerto Rico, to be United States District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico.

During the balance of the week, Senate may consider any cleared legislative and executive business.

Senate Committees

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: March 6, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Timothy G. Massad, of Connecticut, to be Chairman, Sharon Y. Bowen, of New York, and J. Christopher Giancarlo, of New Jersey, all to be a Commissioner, all of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, 10 a.m., SR–328A.

Committee on Appropriations: March 5, Subcommittee on Department of Defense, to hold hearings to examine national security space launch programs, 10 a.m., SD–192.

Committee on Armed Services: March 5, to hold hearings to examine the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program, 9:30 a.m., SH–216.

March 5, Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, to hold hearings to examine nuclear forces and policies in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program, 2:30 p.m., SR–222.

March 6, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine United States Central Command and United States Africa Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: March 6, to hold hearings to examine Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP–21) reauthorization, focusing on the Federal role and current challenges to public transportation, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on the Budget: March 5, to hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015, 10 a.m., SD–608.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: March 6, Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety, and Security, to hold hearings to examine enhancing our rail safety, focusing on current challenges for passenger and freight rail, 11 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: March 6, to hold hearings to examine preventing potential chemical threats and improving safety, focusing on oversight of the President's executive order on improving chemical facility safety and security, 10 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Finance: March 5, to hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015; to be immediately followed by a business meeting to consider subcommittee vacancies and other organizational matters, 10:30 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: March 6, to hold hearings to examine Syria spillover, focusing on the growing threat of terrorism and sectarianism in the Middle East, 11 a.m., SD–419.

March 6, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Deborah L. Birx, of Maryland, to be Ambassador at Large and Coordinator of United States Government Activities to Combat HIV/AIDS Globally, Suzan G. LeVine, of Washington, to be Ambassador to the Swiss Confederation, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to the Principality of Liechtenstein, Maureen Elizabeth Cormack, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Peter A. Selfridge, of Minnesota, to be Chief of Protocol, and to have the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service, all of the Department of State, 2:15 p.m., SD–419.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: March 5, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of L. Reginald Brothers, Jr., of Massachusetts, to be Under

Secretary for Science and Technology, and Francis Xavier Taylor, of Maryland, to be Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis, both of the Department of Homeland Security, 9:30 a.m., SD–342.

March 6, Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight, to hold an oversight hearing to examine contractor performance information, 10:30 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on the Judiciary: March 6, business meeting to consider S. 1675, to reduce recidivism and increase public safety, and the nominations of Robin S. Rosenbaum, of Florida, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit, Bruce Howe Hendricks, to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina, Mark G. Mastroianni, to be United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts, and Leslie Ragon Caldwell, of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: March 5, business meeting to consider the nomination of Maria Contreras-Sweet, of California, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration, 10:30 a.m., SR–428A.

Select Committee on Intelligence: March 6, to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

Special Committee on Aging: March 5, to hold hearings to examine income security and the elderly, focusing on securing gains made in the war on poverty, 2:15 p.m., SD–562.

House Committees

Committee on Appropriations, March 5, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, hearing on Department of Agriculture FY 2015 Budget, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

March 5, Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, hearing on Library of Congress FY 2015 Budget, 10 a.m., HT–2, Capitol.

March 5, Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, hearing on Government Accountability Office FY 2015 Budget, 11 a.m., HT–2, Capitol.

March 6, Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, hearing on House Officers FY 2015 Budget, 10 a.m., HT–2, Capitol.

March 6, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, and Related Agencies, hearing on Commodity Futures Trading Commission FY 2015 Budget, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, March 5, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Budget Requests from the U.S. Pacific Command, U.S. Central Command, and U.S. Africa Command'', 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

March 6, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Budget Request from the Department of Defense'', 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on the Budget, March 5, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The President's Fiscal Year 2015 Budget'', 2 p.m., 210 Cannon.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, March 5, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Culture of Union Favoritism: The Return of the NLRB's Ambush Election Rule'', 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, March 6, Subcommittee on Energy and Power, hearing entitled ''Benefits of and Challenges to Energy Access in the 21st Century: Fuel Supply and Infrastructure'', 9 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, March 5, Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit, hearing entitled ''Data Security: Examining Efforts to Protect Americans' Financial Information'', 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

March 5, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled ''The Growth of Financial Regulation and its Impact on International Competitiveness'', 2 p.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, March 5, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade, hearing entitled ''Threats to Israel: Terrorist Funding and Trade Boycotts'', 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

March 6, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''U.S. Foreign Policy Toward Ukraine'', 9:30 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on the Judiciary, March 5, Full Committee, markup on the following legislation: H.R. 3732, the ''Immigration Compliance Enforcement Act''; H.R. 3973, the ''Faithful Execution of the Law Act of 2014''; and H.R. 4138, the ''Executive Needs to Faithfully Observe and Respect Congressional Enactments Act'', 10:30 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, March 5, Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs, hearing entitled ''National Fish Hatchery System: Strategic Hatchery and Workforce Planning Report'', 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

March 6, Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation, hearing on the following legislation: H.R. 414, to provide for the continued lease or eventual conveyance of certain Federal land within the boundaries of Fort Wainwright Military Reservation in Fairbanks, Alaska; H.R. 1839, the ''Hermosa Creek Watershed Protection Act of 2013''; H.R. 2430, the ''Hinchliffe Stadium Heritage Act of 2013''; and H.R. 3606, the ''Emigrant Wilderness Historical Use Preservation Act of 2013'', 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, March 5, Full Committee, continued hearing on ''The IRS: Targeting Americans for Their Political Beliefs'', 9:30 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Rules, March 5, Full Committee, hearing on H.R. 2641, the ''Responsibly and Professionally Invigorating Development Act of 2013''; and H.R. 2824, the ''Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America'', 3 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, March 6, Subcommittee on Oversight and Subcommittee on Research and Technology, joint hearing entitled ''Can Technology Protect Americans from International Cybercriminals?'', 9:30 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, March 5, Full Committee, markup on the following legislation: H.R. 4093, the ''Greater Opportunities for Small Business Act of 2014''; H.R. 4094, the ''Contracting Data and Bundling Accountability Act of 2014''; H.R. 2751, the ''Commonsense Construction Contracting Act of 2013''; H.R. 2882, the ''Improving Opportunities for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses Act of 2013''; H.R. 776, the ''Security in Bonding Act of 2013''; H.R. 2452, the ''Women's Procurement Program Equalization Act of 2013''; and H.R. 4121, the ''Small Business Development Centers Improvements Act of 2014'', 1 p.m., 2360 Rayburn.

March 6, Subcommittee on Contracting and Workforce, hearing entitled ''ObamaCare and the Self-Employed: What About Us?'', 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, March 5, Panel on Public-Private Partnership, hearing entitled ''Overview of Public-Private Partnerships for Highway and Transit Projects'', 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Ways and Means, March 6, Full Committee, hearing on President Obama's budget proposals for fiscal year 2015, 9:30 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, March 6, Full Committee, hearing on access to transcripts; member access request; and ongoing intelligence activities, 9 a.m., 304–HVC. This is a closed hearing.

Joint Meetings

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: March 5, to hold hearings to examine developments in the Western Balkans and policy responses, focusing on policy approaches of the United States toward the countries of the Western Balkans, 10 a.m., SD–106.

Joint Hearing: March 5, Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, to hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of Veterans of Foreign Wars, 10 a.m., SD–G50.

March 6, Full Committee, to hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of the American Veterans (AMVETS), Blinded Veterans Association, Jewish War Veterans, Military Officers Association of America, Military Order of the Purple Heart, National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs, National Guard Association of the United States, The Retired Enlisted Association, Vietnam Veterans of America, 9:30 a.m., 345, Cannon Building.

Résumé of Congressional Activity

SECOND SESSION OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

The first table gives a comprehensive résumé of all legislative business transacted by the Senate and House. The second table accounts for all nominations submitted to the Senate by the President for Senate confirmation.

DATA ON LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

January 3 through February 28, 2014

	Senate	*House*	*Total*
Days in session	29	28	..
Time in session	159 hrs., 09′	118 hrs., 31′	..
Congressional Record:			
Pages of proceedings	1,253	2,099	..
Extensions of Remarks	..	285	..
Public bills enacted into law	7	6	13
Private bills enacted into law	..	..	..
Bills in conference	2	2	..
Measures passed, total	51	64	115
Senate bills	10	4	..
House bills	4	36	..
Senate joint resolutions	2	2	..
House joint resolutions	1	1	..
Senate concurrent	1	..	..
House concurrent	4	4	..
Simple resolutions	29	17	..
Measures reported, total	*9	*50	59
Senate bills	7	..	..
House bills	..	41	..
Senate joint resolutions	..	..	..
House joint resolutions	..	..	..
Senate concurrent	..	..	..
House concurrent	..	..	..
Simple resolutions	2	9	..
Special reports	1	..	..
Conference reports	1	1	..
Measures pending on calendar	210	22	..
Measures introduced, total	226	398	624
Bills	180	328	..
Joint resolutions	2	6	..
Concurrent resolutions	3	16	..
Simple resolutions	41	48	..
Quorum calls	..	1	..
Yea-and-nay votes	47	42	..
Recorded votes	..	47	..
Bills vetoed	..	..	..
Vetoes overridden	..	..	..

DISPOSITION OF EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS

January 3 through February 28, 2014

Civilian nominations, totaling 410 (including 2 nominations carried over from the First Session), disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	26
Unconfirmed	382
Withdrawn	2
Other Civilian nominations, totaling 1,862, disposed of as follows:	
Unconfirmed	1,862
Air Force nominations, totaling 1,203, disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	632
Unconfirmed	571
Army nominations, totaling 654, disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	459
Unconfirmed	195
Navy nominations, totaling 76, disposed of as follows:	
Unconfirmed	76
Marine Corps nominations, totaling 819, disposed of as follows:	
Unconfirmed	819

Summary

Total nominations carried over from the First Session	2
Total nominations received this Session	5,022
Total confirmed	1,117
Total unconfirmed	3,905
Total withdrawn	2
Total returned to the White House	0

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Wednesday, March 5

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Senate will resume consideration of the nomination of Debo P. Adegbile, of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General, and vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination at 11:45 a.m. If cloture is invoked, Senate will vote on confirmation of the nomination. Following disposition of the nomination of Debo P. Adegbile, or if cloture is not invoked on the nomination, Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Pedro A. Delgado Hernandez, of Puerto Rico, to be United States District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico.

(Senate expects to recess following the votes for their respective party conferences.)

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Wednesday, March 5

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Consideration of H.R. 4118—Suspending the Individual Mandate Penalty Law Equals Fairness Act (Subject to a Rule). Begin consideration of H.R. 3826—Electricity Security and Affordability Act (Subject to a Rule).

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